

A Companion to Medieval Genoa

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A Companion to Medieval Genoa

Edited by

Carrie E. Beneš



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List of Abbreviations

Primary Sources

- AG Stella, Giorgio, and Giovanni Stella, *Annales Genuenses*, ed. G. Petti Balbi, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores NS* 17.4 (Bologna, 1975).
- AGC *Annali genovesi di Caffaro e de' continuatori*, ed. L.T. Belgrano and C. Imperiale di Sant'Angelo, FSI 11–14 and 14 bis (Rome, 1890–1929).
- ASG Archivio di Stato, Genova.
- ASLSP *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*.
- CARG Giustiniani, A., *Castigatissimi annali della Repubblica di Genova* (Genoa, 1537; repr. Bologna, 1981).
- CDSS Ciarlo, D., and M. Calleri, eds., *Codice diplomatico del monastero di Santo Stefano di Genova* (965–1327), FSL 23–6 (Genoa, 2008).
- CSS Calleri, M., S. Macchiavello, and M. Traino, eds., *Le carte del monastero di San Siro di Genova* (952–1328), FSL 5–8 (Genoa, 1997).
- CDG Imperiale di Sant'Angelo, C., ed., *Codice diplomatico della repubblica di Genova*, FSI 77, 79, 89 (Rome, 1936–42).
- FSI *Fonti per la storia d'Italia*.
- FSL *Fonti per la storia della Liguria*.
- GL Jacopo da Varagine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. W.G. Ryan (repr. Princeton, 2012).
- GM Petti Balbi, G., *Genova medievale vista dai contemporanei* (Genoa, 1978).
- JVC *Iacopo da Varagine e la sua cronaca di Genova dalle origini al 1297*, ed. G. Monleone, FSI 84–6 (Rome, 1941).
- LPE *Liber privilegiorum ecclesiae Ianuensis*, ed. D. Puncuh (Genoa, 1962).
- LA Jacopo da Varagine, *Legenda aurea*, eds. A. and L. Vitale Brovarone (Turin, 2007).
- LI *I Libri iurium della Repubblica di Genova*, ed. A. Rovere, D. Puncuh, et al. (Genoa, 1992–2002).
- NL *Notai liguri dei secoli XII–XV*.
- RC Belgrano, L.T., ed., *Il Registro della Curia arcivescovile di Genova*, ASLSP 2.2 (1862).
- RC2 Belgrano, L.T., and L. Beretta, *Il secondo Registro della Curia arcivescovile di Genova*, ASLSP 18 (1887).
- RSL Savelli, R., ed., *Repertorio degli statuti della Liguria (sec. XII–XVIII)* (Genoa, 2003).

Secondary Literature

- CASD* van Doosselaere, Q., *Commercial Agreements and Social Dynamics in Medieval Genoa* (Cambridge, 2009).
- CEFR* *Collection de l'École française de Rome*.
- CGM* Di Fabio, C., and R. Besta, eds., *La cattedrale di Genova nel medioevo secoli VI–XIV* (Genoa, 1998).
- CSFS* *Collana storica di fonti e studi diretta da Geo Pistarino*.
- CSL* Calderoni Masetti, A.R., and G. Wolf (eds.), *La Cattedrale di San Lorenzo a Genova* (Modena, 2012).
- G&G* Epstein, S.A., *Genoa & the Genoese, 958–1528* (Chapel Hill, 1996).
- GC* Petti Balbi, G., *Governare la città: Pratiche sociali e linguaggi politici a Genova in età medievale*, Reti Medievali Monografie 4 (Florence, 2007). <http://www.rmoa.unina.it/2228/>
- GMCI* Guglielmotti, P., *Genova, Il medioevo nelle città italiane 6* (Spoleto, 2013).
- GXV* Heers, J., *Gênes au XV^e siècle: Activité économique et problèmes sociaux* (Paris, 1961).
- IELM* Polonio, V., *Istituzioni ecclesiastiche della Liguria medievale* (Rome, 2002).
- MEFRM* *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome: Moyen-Age, Temps modernes*.
- SCL* Puncuh, D., ed., *Storia della cultura ligure, ASLSP NS 44.1–2, 45.1–2* (Genoa, 2004–5).
- SG* Puncuh, D., ed. *Storia di Genova: Mediterraneo, Europa, Atlantico* (Genoa, 2003).
- UCP* Grossi Bianchi, L., and E. Poleggi, *Una città portuale del Medioevo: Genova nei secoli X–XVI* (Genoa, 1980).
- w&w* Epstein, S.A., *Wills and Wealth in Medieval Genoa, 1150–1250* (Cambridge, MA, 1984).

Editorial Note and Glossary

Currency

Currencies and rates of exchange pose major challenges for scholars and translators, as they varied widely throughout later medieval Italy and the Mediterranean. The standard currency of account in Italy and Europe was the *lira*, a monetary unit equivalent to one pound of silver; this was generally divided into 20 shillings (Latin *solidi*, Italian *soldi*), each of which was subdivided into 12 pennies (*denarii*, *denari*), giving 240 *denarii* to the *lira*. The *lira* was more often a money of account than a minted coin, however. Once Genoa began minting its own money (the *denaro* of 1139), the local currency was known as the *lira genovese*, and its gold equivalent was the *genovino*, first coined in 1252. To give only one example of the complexity of the monetary landscape: at 3.54g of gold, the *genovino* was physically and functionally equivalent to the Florentine florin—also first coined in 1252—yet the florin was worth 240 Florentine *denari* while the *genovino* was worth only 96 Genoese *denari*.¹

Spelling

Scribes writing medieval Latin and Italian did not distinguish between the letters I and J; the latter is a pen-flourished version of the former often used at the beginning or end of a word. Modern editors must therefore choose whether to render a particular word like the medieval Latin form of Genoa as *Janua* (as it would have been written at the time) or *Ianua* (which invites a closer approximation of an accurate pronunciation from English speakers, for whom I and J are pronounced very differently). Throughout the text I have therefore chosen to use I for Latin words (e.g., *Ianua*), but J for Anglicized names or terms (the god Janus) and Italian names and terms (the name Jacopo).

Names

Keeping track of names in multiple languages cited by multiple native speakers of different languages presents its own challenges. In general, I have kept to the following guidelines when rendering names:

1 Gene Brucker, *Florence: The Golden Age, 1138–1737* (Berkeley, 1983), 70–71.

Names of people: because they are best known that way in English-language scholarship, I have rendered names of popes, emperors, and saints in English (Emperor Frederick II, Pope Innocent III, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Syrus). Other personal and family names generally appear in Italian (Jacopo da Varagine, Ingo della Volta) except when the person or family in question is not Italian (for example, Markward of Anweiler)—in which case I have used the version of the name likely to be most familiar to an English-speaking audience.

Jacopo da Varagine is a peculiar case, because he is best known in English by the Latin form of his name, as *Jacobus de Voragine*, while Italians know him by both Jacopo da Varagine (an Italianized version of the Latin) and Jacopo da Varazze (the modern name of his birthplace). Because Jacopo appears in this volume chiefly in broader historical context—as the late thirteenth-century archbishop of Genoa rather than the author of the *Golden Legend*—I have used the Italian form “da Varagine” instead of the Latin form more familiar to English readers.

Place names: Names of cities and regions have been Anglicized where a familiar English form exists (Genoa, Florence, Rome, Jerusalem, etc.); all other place names are given in Italian (Portovenere, Ventimiglia, but also the Riviera di Levante, the coastal area east of Genoa). Names of churches (San Lorenzo) and monuments (the Porta Soprana/Porta Sant’Andrea) are given in Italian; this convention has the added benefit of distinguishing, for example, the cathedral church of San Lorenzo from its dedicatee Saint Lawrence.

Moving beyond these conventions, I have tried to navigate between the Scylla of over-translation (creating false equivalencies in an effort to create a readable text) and the Charybdis of under-translation (producing chapters full of untranslated terms that are unintelligible to non-Italian speakers). Quotations from Latin, Italian, and other languages have therefore been translated into English, but numerous Italian and Latin terms have been left in their original forms to signal a particular technical meaning; see the glossary that follows.

Translation is an art rather than a science, however, and in one case judicious anachronism seemed preferable to the potential confusion raised by any of the multiple possible original terms: this is the Latin term *marchio* (*marchese*, in Italian), which we have rendered as the English “marquess.” A *marchio* was originally lord of a march (Latin *marca*), a frontier region of the Carolingian empire, and the term survived into the later Middle Ages as a common aristocratic title. Among possible English equivalents, the French-origin “marquis” and German-origin “margrave” both have socio-cultural connotations inappropriate to this peculiarly Italian context, generally dating from much later centuries. I therefore thought it best to use the English “marquess” in all such

cases: since the title of marquess is unusual in English (the first English marquess was named in 1385, but the rank was not much used until the nineteenth century), I hope that its use in this volume—and that of its even-less-common adjective form, “marquesal”—will signal the complexity of the translation process, and my determination to avoid the obvious but potentially misleading equivalencies of marquis and margrave.

Glossary of Untranslated and/or Technical Terms

Please note: The definitions given here are meant as an aid to understanding, and are not intended to be comprehensive.

abate del popolo See *capitano del popolo*.

advocatus A legal deputy or trustee; from this, a title and social rank beginning in the ninth and tenth centuries; eventually the name of an aristocratic Genoese family.

albergo (pl. *alberghi*) A confederacy of noble families and their clients living in a fortified neighborhood of medieval Genoa.²

capitano del popolo “Captain of the people”; a magistracy instituted in Genoa in the mid-thirteenth century when the *popolo* (that is, a coalition of non-nobles; see below) forced the consular aristocracy to give them a voice in government. The *capitano del popolo* was the voice of the *popolo* in government: sometimes he was the only chief magistrate, and sometimes he served alongside other magistrates. In the late thirteenth century, when the office of *capitano* had come to be monopolized by the nobility, the office of *abate del popolo* (abbot of the people) was created to serve as the “real” voice of the *popolo* in government.

Casa di San Giorgio The “House” or Bank of Saint George, the private bank into which the Genoese commune divested most of the public debt and also oversight of its colonies.

commune Common in northern and central Italian cities in the late eleventh through fourteenth centuries, communes were city governments (often characterized as “republican”) in which power was originally shared among the city elite. From the early thirteenth century onward, especially with the transition to “popular” government (see *popolo*, below), other

² The precise nature and definition of the *alberghi* is much debated: see discussions in chaps. 7, pp. 172–3, and 9, pp. 232–4.

social categories (newly wealthy merchants, artisans, and members of local guilds) were admitted into the ruling group.

compagna A sworn association for mutual aid and support; the *compagna* sworn by a group of prominent citizens in 1099 (on the eve of the departure of many for the First Crusade) formed the basis of the Genoese commune.

compera (pl. *compere*) Literally, a purchase; a public loan or portion of public debt. The first *compere* grew out of the practice of tax farming, in which moneylenders or investors would pay the commune for the right to collect a particular tax; the *compere* were public loans, divided into shares, against which the commune committed future tax income. The *compere* thus became a kind of purchase of public income or investment in public debt. They were generally named after the tax from which their income came (*compera* of salt, wine, etc.) or the expenses that made the loans necessary (*compera* for the war against Venice, etc.) For a lengthier discussion, see chap. 15 of this volume.

consorteria An association of individuals united to advance specific familial, economic, or military aims.

consul The chief magistrates of the early communes, usually elected both by and from the civic elite for terms of six months to a year. Also used in its more familiar modern sense as a title for communal representatives in Genoa's overseas possessions (cf. also viscount, *podestà*).

contado The territory controlled by a city-state, usually its surrounding agricultural hinterland. The term is only rarely used for Genoa since *districtus* is generally used to indicate the territory subject to the city.

curia A court or chancery, especially of a prelate or prince of the church: the papal curia, but also the episcopal curia (the court or chancery of the bishop).

districtus A term with two chief meanings when used with regard to Genoa: the narrower *districtus* is the suburban territory around Genoa and a vast part of the Levante where—in the absence of other jurisdictions—the commune of Genoa managed to assert its rule. By contrast, the wider *districtus* is a territory defined in the sources as “from Corvo to Ventimiglia,” roughly corresponding to modern-day Liguria; this is the territory over which Genoa sought but never fully managed to extend its rule.

doge, dogato A chief magistrate, best known in Venice, but common in Genoa in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (replacing the rule of the *capitani del popolo*). The office or system is known as the *dogato*.

Dominio The “Dominion,” Genoa's multifarious territorial possessions.

fideles Loyal or faithful followers, vassals.

fondaco A building for the collective storage and sale of goods, a warehouse, generally belonging to a merchant community abroad. An Italianization of the Arabic *funduq*.

genovino See *lira*.

Gothia The lands ruled by the Mongols around the Black Sea.

Lanterna Lighthouse: medieval Genoa had two lighthouses, one on each side of the entrance to the harbor; the larger of the two, on the western end of the harbor, was known as the *Lanterna*. It was probably built around 1128, although its current form dates from 1543.

Levante, Riviera di Levante The Ligurian coast to the east of Genoa; see also Ponente.

lira (pl. *lire*) The local currency of account, or *lira genovese*, equivalent to one pound of silver. Also equivalent to the gold *genovino*, a coin first minted in 1252. (See "Currency," above.)

loggia A roofed porch or portico, covered overhead but open to the elements on one or more sides. The medieval term evolved from a general architectural meaning to signifying a structure specifically dedicated to communal business and trade.

Mahona (pl. *Mahone*) Deriving from Arabic *ma'una*, a joint stock company formed for an overseas enterprise; the best known Genoese *Mahone* are those of Chios and Cyprus. While these enterprises were communally sponsored, the creditors of the loans the commune took out to fund them eventually banded together to claim the right to administer those territories themselves on the commune's behalf.

marquess, marquesal An official (originally Carolingian). See translation note, above.

parlamentum A citizens' assembly.

pars, partes A party or faction.

pieve A rural church with a baptistry and cemetery upon which other churches in the same territorial district without these amenities depended.

podestà (pl. *podestà*) An executive magistrate, generally a foreigner (that is, not Genoese), commissioned to govern the city for a limited term; it was thought that non-native status would reduce corruption and conflicts of interest. The Genoese first replaced the rule of consuls with that of a *podestà* in 1191. The term is also used of communal officials appointed to govern dependent cities or territories (see *podesteria* below, and also secondary meanings of consul and viscount).

podesteria The Genoese also appointed *podestà* of their own, generally prominent citizens, to govern dependent towns and territories; a *podesteria* was the district ruled by such a *podestà*.

Ponente, Riviera di Ponente The Ligurian coast to the west of Genoa; see also Levante.

popolo “The people” or “popular party”; the portion of the citizenry that claimed a part in political life by uniting the interests of (non-aristocratic) merchants and artisans: families of recent origin or wealth, who had played little part in politics under the consular system. The term “popular”, however, should not mislead the reader into thinking the members of the *popolo* or their principles were democratic. The party was usually led by a *capitano del popolo* (captain of the people), and its adherents are referred to as *populares* (Latin) or *popolari* (Italian).

Riviera The coast; an important way of conceptualizing territory in Liguria due to its mountainous interior. Subdivided into Levante (the coast east of Genoa) and Ponente (the coast west of Genoa), which together are referred to as the *Rivieras* (Italian *Riviere*).

Romania Not the modern country of Romania but the medieval Italian term for the Byzantine Empire, who called themselves “Romans” (*Romaioi*, in Greek) and considered their empire the unbroken extension of the classical Roman Empire.

signoria Literally, lordship; a system of government ruled by a (usually hereditary) lord (Italian *signore*) who gains personal control over a city or commune and its *contado*; the norm in northern and central Italian cities after 1300. Its adjective form, signorial, should not to be confused with seigneurial, a term describing lordships of comital or marquesal origin, or lordships which developed spontaneously (that is, without an imperial mandate).

vicario Literally, vicar; the representative of a ruler or government appointed to exercise jurisdiction in a subject city or territory. Thus one might speak of an imperial *vicario* (emperor’s representative) in Lombardy or the Genoese *vicario* (communal representative) in Caffa.

viscount, *vicecomes* An aristocratic title of Carolingian origin (literally, a count’s representative); also used for communal representatives in Genoa’s overseas possessions (cf. consul, *podestà*).

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Introduction

Carrie E. Beneš

The city of Genoa has always been defined by its topography: as the steep Apennine foothills of the northwest Italian peninsula plunge into the Ligurian Sea, they provide both a dramatic landscape and the deep water necessary for industrial shipping. Yet the rugged terrain that provides good conditions for ships also limits the city's development, since it provides few flat areas suitable for docks, freight yards, airports, and other commercial infrastructure. The railway routes laboriously constructed around and through the city in the nineteenth century are a mass of tunnels, while the main highways leading through the Giovi Pass to the industrial centers of the Po valley such as Milan and Turin offer an extensive series of tall viaducts and hair-raising switchbacks. The city is thus grounded on the tension between the advantages its location offers and the challenges they pose. Yet Genoa is today Italy's busiest port, and has maintained its position as one of the great ports of the Mediterranean for nearly a thousand years.

Genoa's status and character as a major port city have tended to overshadow its history and cultural offerings, and it does not figure high on most tourist itineraries. It is probably best known (however inaccurately) as the birthplace of Christopher Columbus, as well as the site of the 2001 G8 protests. Yet its museums and medieval alleys amply repay visitors' attention, and recent efforts at redevelopment—for example, of the old inner harbor (*Porto Antico*), redesigned by Renzo Piano for Expo 1992—have polished some of the city's formerly tarnished glory. Its designation as a European Capital of Culture for 2004 also helped to raise a profile usually eclipsed by the tourist showcases of Florence and Venice.

While there is a strong tradition of local scholarship anchored at the Università di Genova, the work of historians writing in English, particularly on the medieval and early modern periods, has tended to reflect—and perpetuate—similar biases, in that Florence and Venice have received the lion's share of scholars' attention. This emphasis in the available literature tends to give students and non-specialists the impression that these two cities were more advanced than other contemporary Italian cities, and that their achievements were unique. Yet defining all Italian cities by the standards of two and presenting those standards as normative does the rest of the peninsula a disservice: the medieval and early modern cities of Italy were “successful” in

numerous, very different ways. While Genoa lacks Florence's humanist credentials for the fourteenth century or artistic masterpieces of the fifteenth—standards that have defined “Italy” for these periods from Burckhardt onwards—it was nonetheless one of the great commercial entrepôts of the premodern Mediterranean.

The goal of this volume is to redress some of these imbalances by introducing medieval Genoa and its scholarship to a wider English-speaking audience than they have hitherto enjoyed. From the city's meteoric rise around the time of the First Crusade to its segue from commerce into banking at the end of the fifteenth century, Genoa was a dominant force in the European and Mediterranean economies. At the same time, the city's social and political developments are fairly analogous to those of other Italian cities in the same period. Genoa thus provides a case study of the many levels on which such urban communities operated, and the many interest groups of which their inhabitants were part: international trade, regional politics, and civic society along with the more intimate ties of neighborhood and kin. The city's medieval history also refutes many basic stereotypes and misconceptions about the Middle Ages—for example, that life in medieval Europe was predominantly rural and localized. The study of the history of Genoa therefore broadens not only our understanding of medieval Italy but of medieval Europe and its relations with the rest of the premodern world.

While devoting some attention to the early medieval history of the city (through the eleventh century), this volume will mainly focus on the period considered medieval Genoa's height, from the founding of the medieval commune at the end of the eleventh century to the “Columbian moment” (1492) and the establishment of Andrea Doria's republic (1528) around the turn of the sixteenth century. Within that scope, the volume's contributors have attempted to balance multiple perspectives and scales: the Genoese both in and outside of Genoa, along with their concerns at the levels of neighborhood, city, region, peninsula, and continent. The remainder of this introduction will provide a general overview of Genoese history and historiography for this period, offer some observations on the similarities and differences between Genoa and the rest of the cities of medieval Italy, and conclude with a few reflections on the insights to be gained from a more profound understanding of medieval Genoa and its place in the history of Europe and the Mediterranean.

History

Archaeological evidence suggests that the site of Genoa was inhabited as far back as 2300 BC, in the early Bronze Age.¹ The earliest permanent community seems to have been a fortified settlement on the hill known as *Castrum* (now *Castello*) just south of the old port, and its early inhabitants were probably semi-nomadic tribes supporting themselves with subsistence crops and transhumance herding. Yet the city gained a reputation for trade very early: the Greeks and Etruscans appear to have taken advantage of its deep harbor in the sixth through fourth centuries BC, and Strabo's first-century *Geography* refers to Roman *Genua* as the "emporium of the *Ligures*."² According to the historian Livy, Genoa became a provincial ally of Rome during the Second Punic War (218–201 BC). After being sacked by Carthaginian forces in 209 BC, it gained Roman municipal rights, expanded northward into the area around the harbor, and became a trade nexus for the Romans in northwest Italy. It formed one terminus of the Via Postumia (148 BC) that went north through the Giovi Pass to Tortona, Piacenza, and the Po valley, as well as of the Via Aemilia Scauri, which followed the coastline south to Pisa. In 13 BC the emperor Augustus extended these routes west along the Ligurian coast toward Arles and renamed the merged route the Via Julia Augusta. This laid a basis for the city's development not only as a port but also as an urban center for that stretch of the coast and a transit point for goods and travellers headed inland.

After the end of the Western Roman Empire, Genoa became part of the Ostrogothic kingdom, and later the seat of a Byzantine vicariate; the Byzantines, for example, are generally credited with having popularized the cult of Saint George in the city. According to Paul the Deacon's *History of the Lombards*, it was the seat of the archbishops of Milan in exile for some time after the Lombard capture of their own city in 568, but the Lombards took Genoa itself in about 643. Finally, after the annexation of the Lombard kingdom by the Franks in 773, the first "count of Genoa" appears in the sources: one Ademar, who died fighting the Saracens in Corsica.³ This event—along with the sack of the city by Saracens in 934–5—foreshadows important aspects of Genoa's later development: first, its maritime focus, and second, its hostility

1 The best general overviews of Genoese history are *G&G* and *GMCI*; for a brief summary, see Gorse/Epstein, "Genoa." All works cited in this introduction appear in the Selected Bibliography (pp. 521–30).

2 See chap. 3, n. 8.

3 Cf. chaps. 2, p. 52, and 3, pp. 81–2.

(both commercial and religious) to the Muslims of Spain and North Africa who dominated the western Mediterranean in the early Middle Ages.

After the sack of 934–5, therefore, the later tenth and eleventh centuries were a period of increasing momentum for Genoa. Key agreements of 958⁴ (a diploma granted the Genoese by Berengar II and his son Adalbert) and 1056⁵ (a charter from Marquess Alberto confirming the customs of the city) reveal a revitalized community eager to negotiate for rights and privileges. Maritime trade was growing, with regular commerce in goods such as wine, olive oil, grain, and cloth. Meanwhile, the Genoese also used their galleys militarily, allying themselves with the Pisans against the Muslim outposts of the western Mediterranean. Joint attacks on Sardinia in 1016 and Mahdia (in modern Tunisia) in 1087 demonstrate the impressive naval forces that Genoa and Pisa, even as relatively small towns, could field over some distance.

By the end of the eleventh century Genoa was acknowledged as one of Italy's major sea powers, which made it a natural point of departure for crusaders wishing to take ship for the Holy Land. After Urban II's call to liberate Jerusalem in 1095, the Genoese became involved not only as shippers carrying soldiers and supplies to the East and back, but also in the East as a crusader navy and soldiers themselves, playing a crucial role in the conquests of Antioch (1098), Jerusalem (1099), and Caesarea (1101), among others. As a result, they brought home numerous relics and other spoils of victory, and established important trading relationships with the new Latin crusader states. At the same time—probably in an effort to ensure that life at home remained stable while so many of its citizens were absent—the community established one of Italy's first autonomous communal governments, a *compagna comunis* ("common association") governed by six consuls elected annually. All of these developments were recorded by the annalist Caffaro, an eyewitness and participant in both the First Crusade and the founding of the commune; his narrative of civic events was officially adopted by the city government in 1152, and began an unprecedented two-century-long official Genoese annalistic tradition.

The twelfth century continues this story of increasing regional hegemony, political independence, and economic growth. While extending its influence over the region of Liguria, the commune built a new set of city walls, which were frantically finished as defense against Frederick Barbarossa in the 1150s; the commune was also a signatory to the first Lombard League in 1167. Ecclesiastical changes contributed to the city's autonomy and regional

4 Discussed at length in chap. 3.

5 G&G, 20–1. On the use of the term "marquess" throughout this volume, see the Editorial Note, pp. xviii–xix.

influence, as it was raised to an archbishopric by Innocent II in 1133 and assigned several suffragan bishoprics on Sardinia and Corsica (along with several others in Liguria and Piedmont). This aided Genoese efforts to assert political control in those areas and gave the Genoese an advantage over Pisa, their major rival in the Tyrrhenian Sea. Yet factionalism within Genoa was still a problem, so on the eve of the Third Crusade in 1190, the Genoese switched to a podestarial regime—government by a foreign *podestà* instead of by citizen consuls—in the hope that non-Genoese magistrates, being professionally trained in law and (at least theoretically) more impartial, could balance the interests of the city's various factions more successfully.

As the volume and breadth of Genoa's Mediterranean trade grew, its character shifted as well. Since the city's chief economic resource was its galleys—which were fast and well-defended, but required large crews (about 120 men each) and had limited storage—Genoese merchants gradually shifted their focus to the trade in luxury goods: spices, silks, sugar, gold, and slaves, all of which offered high value per volume and were thus better suited to galley transport than bulk goods. This trade continued to develop in the thirteenth century, alongside that of Genoa's chief competitors Pisa and Venice. A series of wars ending with the Battle of Meloria in 1284, in which the Genoese were victorious, essentially removed Pisa as a serious military and economic threat. Yet Venice remained, and after the Frankish-Venetian alliance took Constantinople in 1204, the Genoese found their trade opportunities in the East severely diminished. Decades of skirmishes and disputes culminated in the Genoese-Venetian war of Saint Sabas (1256–8); while the Venetians and their allies (including the Pisans) triumphed in that conflict, the Genoese ultimately aligned themselves with the exiled Byzantines and assisted their recapture of Constantinople in 1261. This gained Genoa the outpost of Pera near Constantinople, and the extension of their trade networks into the Black Sea, especially the northern outpost of Caffa (now Feodosia; figs. 79–80).

At home, podestarial rule continued uneasily, with a notable interlude of popular rule under the *capitano del popolo* Guglielmo Boccanegra between 1257 and 1262. This period may fairly be considered the heyday of the medieval commune—Genoa matched Florence for the earliest production of a gold coinage (the *genovino*, vs. the florin) in 1252 (fig. 61). Yet in 1295–6 factional rioting did major damage to the cathedral—lamented by then-archbishop Jacopo da Varagine in his *History of Genoa*—and foreshadowed declining political stability in Genoa through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. On the one hand, new Genoese outposts were established at Chios and Phocaea (now Foça, Turkey), in the eastern Mediterranean, under the new *Mahona* system. On the other hand, persistent factionalism and civil strife caused the Genoese to place

themselves under a series of foreign *signorie*: first Emperor Henry VII (1311–13) and Robert of Naples (1318–25), then the kings of France (1396–1409). These *signorie* alternated, to little lasting effect, with an executive magistracy known as the “perpetual dogeship” (*dogato*) first established by Simone Boccanegra in 1339. Its internal crises also had repercussions for Genoa’s primacy at sea: its galleys suffered a crushing defeat by the Venetians at Chioggia in 1380, and ties with its Eastern colonies grew progressively weaker.

During the fifteenth century, Genoa was caught politically between larger states with interests in northern Italy, being ruled alternately by the kings of France and the dukes of Milan. The city was sacked by the Spanish in 1522, and after the defeat of the French at Pavia in 1525 Genoa was reorganized as an aristocratic republic by the admiral Andrea Doria, and became a client state of Spain. Due to ongoing instability at home and the rise of the Ottomans in the East, trade languished from the 1420s, including the loss of the key Eastern outposts of Pera in 1453 (with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks) and Caffa in 1475. As a result, Genoese merchants, who were already beginning to look west in the fourteenth century, transferred their focus from the eastern Mediterranean (the Levant and the Black Sea) to the western Mediterranean and northern Europe (Spain, Flanders, and England). In the fifteenth century, therefore, while not abandoning long-distance trade, the Genoese shifted their economic emphasis from commerce to banking and the development of local industry. Indeed, the rise to international prominence of Europe’s first chartered bank, the Genoese Casa di San Giorgio—founded in 1407 as an effort to restructure Genoa’s public debt—illustrates this change of economic focus. As the Mediterranean world shifted around them, the Genoese used their commercial, financial, and maritime expertise to pursue new opportunities. The exploits of Genoese sailors such as Cristoforo Colombo (better known as Christopher Columbus) at and on behalf of the Spanish court thus reflect much broader political and economic changes across Europe and the Mediterranean at the turn of the sixteenth century.⁶

Historiography

As in many other Italian cities, the study of medieval Genoa has benefited from rigorous local attention, especially in the areas of published editions and source analysis. This activity has been sponsored in large part by the *Società*

6 Kirk, *Genoa & the Sea*; Dauverd, *Imperial Ambition*.

Ligure di Storia Patria,⁷ which ever since its founding in 1857 has published important monographs and critical editions along with the series *Fonti per la storia di Liguria* and several journals—most prominently, the *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, or *ASLSP*). This work has encompassed the publication of the city's official annals,⁸ its two major premodern chronicles by Jacopo da Varagine and Giorgio Stella,⁹ and the *Libri iurium*, the medieval commune's collected books of laws and treaties.¹⁰ These have been joined by critical editions of the registers and cartularies of ecclesiastical bodies such as the cathedral and major monasteries,¹¹ and the registers of Genoese notaries both in Genoa and the *Dominio* (Genoa's overseas territories).¹² The Società's efforts have therefore produced a mass of published documentation, the combined quantity and depth of which are arguably unmatched for any other city in medieval Europe. For this reason, the present volume devotes an entire chapter to the written sources for medieval Genoese history.¹³ While the scholarly analysis of these materials has traditionally focused directly on their contents—that is, the evidence they provide for political, economic, and institutional history—analyses from the 1970s onward have taken advantage of the richness of the documentation to pursue insights into more abstract topics such as social organization (especially issues of gender), interfaith relations, long-distance trade and cultural networks, and urban topography.¹⁴

Interest in medieval Genoa in the English-speaking scholarly world, however, has largely been limited to economic historians.¹⁵ The pioneering work of Roberto Lopez—in particular, the publication in 1955 of Lopez and Raymond's *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents*—helped to introduce an entire generation of historians to the riches of the Genoese archives. Lopez's work has also inspired social scientists seeking the origins of modern economic systems or trying to develop historical models.¹⁶ More

7 <http://www.storiapatriagenova.it>.

8 *AGC*.

9 *JVC* and *AG*.

10 *LI*, so far in vol. 1 (published in nine parts) and vol. 2 (in three). See discussion in chap. 1, pp. 27–9 and 39–40, and also Rovere, “Tipologie documentali.”

11 See the “Ecclesiastical Records” section of the Selected Bibliography.

12 *Cartolari notarili genovesi*, *Notai liguri*, and *Notariorum itinera*.

13 Chap. 1 of this volume.

14 For example, the respective endeavors of Diane Owen Hughes, Roberta Braccia, and Paola Guglielmotti; Kate Fleet and Georges Jehel; Laura Balletto, David Jacoby, and Sandra Origone; and Ennio Poleggi and Alireza Naser Eslami.

15 See the discussion of this issue at the beginning of chap. 14.

16 Greif, *Institutions*; *CASD*.

recently, Steven A. Epstein, an economic historian by training, has expanded beyond these parameters with his general study *Genoa and the Genoese: 958–1528* (1996).¹⁷ Yet the disadvantage of this intense focus on the Genoese economy is its neglect of other areas of medieval Genoese life, especially its cultural aspects.¹⁸ Likewise, since the city's economic development is both better documented and more complex for the late Middle Ages and early modern period, the work of such historians has resulted in attention devoted to the late medieval and early modern periods at the expense of earlier periods.

At the same time, Genoa tends not to appear in traditional definitions of the Italian Renaissance, as framed by writers from Vasari to Burckhardt and Hans Baron, who have emphasized the cultural and political roles played in fifteenth-century Italy by Florence, Milan, Rome, and Venice, along with smaller signorial centers like Mantua and Urbino. Genoa's relative absence from these narratives is somewhat odd, since Genoese territories supplied several important Renaissance popes (Nicholas V, from Sarzana, and the della Rovere popes Sixtus IV and Julius II, from Savona), while native humanists like Jacopo Bracelli and Giorgio Stella corresponded regularly with better-known colleagues such as Coluccio Salutati, Giannozzo Manetti, and Biondo Flavio.¹⁹ These omissions are most likely the result of at least two factors: first, the cosmopolitanism of the Genoese and their interest in foreign art (especially Netherlandish painting) may have inhibited the growth of a strong local tradition in painting and/or sculpture; second, Genoa's political instability and domination by outside powers rendered it unreceptive to the dynastic dominance—with its resultant political, literary, and artistic patronage—characteristic of Milan, Florence, and other Italian city-states. Thus Genoa bears few of the traditional hallmarks of a “Renaissance city-state.”²⁰

Yet a number of recent publications have begun to uncover previously disregarded aspects of Genoa's history for English-language readers. Steven Epstein's recent book on the “Genoese mind” of Jacopo da Varagine, for example, contextualizes on a local stage the thought of one of the most influential Dominican friars of the thirteenth century.²¹ Similarly, Ross Balzaretti's

17 G&G; see also Epstein's most recent work, *Talents*.

18 The effects of this scholarly focus on Genoese commercial life are discussed in chaps. 5, 6, 7, 11, and 14.

19 See discussion in chap. 11, pp. 329–42.

20 Shaw, “Genoa,” esp. 222.

21 Epstein, *Talents*. My own translation of Jacopo's *History of Genoa*, forthcoming in the Manchester Medieval Sources series, will contribute to this effort to contextualize Jacopo—generally known only for his *Golden Legend*—more broadly as a Dominican, an archbishop, and a citizen of medieval Genoa.

explorations of Genoa's early medieval period have offered a number of important new insights about its relationships with the rest of Liguria and its environmental history.²² Balzaretti's emphasis on non-textual sources, especially archaeological evidence, is matched for later centuries by an important recent focus on material culture, analyzing the physical evidence for Genoese trade and cultural exchange.²³ In the sphere of religion—or more precisely, the complex common-ground between religion and social life—Jane Garnett and Gervase Rosser have analyzed Genoa's miracle-working images, while a number of articles as well as Hall and Phillips' recent edition have illuminated the participation of the Genoese in the Crusades and Crusader states.²⁴ Recent translations of Genoese primary sources—chiefly but not exclusively of sections of the annals of Caffaro and his continuators—have joined the many Genoese documents in Lopez and Raymond's *Medieval Trade*, in the effort to make Genoa's rich source material more accessible to an English-speaking audience.²⁵ These considerations of medieval Genoa have complemented recent publications—for example, by Dauverd, Kirk, Salonia, and Shaw—in the traditionally more robust field of early modern Genoa, while a recent memoir-cum-popular history by BBC writer Nicholas Walton has contributed to (and itself demonstrates) the revitalization of the city's popular image.²⁶

One development in the study of medieval Genoa worthy of particular note is the embrace by those who study it of textual (including archival) digitization and open-access publication. The digital libraries of the *Società Ligure di Storia Patria* (www.storiapatriagenova.it) contain extensive numbers of digital editions, digitized back-issues of periodicals, catalogues, and guides to archives. Several independent projects, such as Giuseppe Felloni's *La Casa delle compere e dei banchi di San Giorgio, 1407–1805* (www.lacasadisangiorgio.it) have also attempted to make particular bodies of evidence more widely available. Further, many of the senior scholars of medieval Genoa (such as Paola Guglielmotti, Giovanna Petti Balbi, and Valeria Polonio) have embraced the opportunities offered by the collaborative open-access site *Reti Medievali* (www.retimedievali.it), which publishes a respected peer-reviewed online

22 DAL.

23 See the discussion and works cited in chap. 10 of this volume.

24 Garnett/Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles* (see esp. discussion at 15–17); Mack, “Italian Quarters” and “Genoese Perspective”; Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*. On the latter, see also the work of David Jacoby.

25 Dotson, “Genoese Civic Annals”; Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*; Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*; and my own forthcoming translation of Jacopo da Varagine's *Chronicle of Genoa* (cf. n. 21, above). More translated documents are available in Lopez/Raymond, *Medieval Trade*; Dean, *Towns of Italy*; and Jansen/Drell/Andrews, *Medieval Italy*.

26 See the general bibliography for Dauverd et al.; also Walton, *Genoa 'La Superba'*.

journal (*Reti Medievali Rivista*) and monograph series, as well as hosting an open-access archive. The circulation of such works of scholarship might previously have been limited to institutional subscribers to the Society's journal, the *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria*, and therefore to relatively few major libraries in the English-speaking world. Recent efforts at digitization have counteracted that very limited distribution to make both classic and recent scholarship on medieval Genoa—as well as editions of its essential sources—freely available, so their potential long-term impact is immense. For this reason, we have taken particular care in the bibliographies of this volume to note internet URLs and DOIs (digital object identifiers) where known.

Certain elements of medieval Genoa's history are unique: for example, the complexity of its economic development and the scope of its commercial success, whether in the realm of twelfth-century trade agreements or fifteenth-century banking policy. The international reach of its trading and social networks is also nearly unparalleled in the medieval world. (While impressive, this broad spread can make analysis challenging, as evidence for the activities of the Genoese can be found in archives from the Baltic to North Africa and the Crimea.) Its well-travelled population, cosmopolitanism, and broad perspective may also explain why Genoa developed relatively few recognizably native cultural phenomena (in contrast, for example, to Florentine, Sienese, Mantuan, or Venetian painting styles), and why its cultural outlook was more European—for example, featuring interests in North African pottery and Flemish art—than specifically Italian. On the political spectrum, the city's well-known instability²⁷ led to long periods of foreign domination, yet despite them, the "Republic of Genoa" was one of only two medieval Italian city-states (the others being Venice and Lucca) to survive until the Napoleonic invasion in 1797.²⁸

Despite these idiosyncrasies, the city presents numerous points of interest by comparison with other Italian cities of the same period. The vagaries of communal politics—from external relations to internal structures—are all on view here, and in many respects the city's history follows the usual pattern of foundation of a consular commune followed by the shift to a podestarial regime, the rise of the *popolo*, and finally fossilization and domination by elite and signorial interests. In and around those developments, Genoa certainly

27 The Genoese were notorious for discord even in medieval Italy, a time and place famous for factionalism and civil instability. Along with the general discussion in chap. 8, cf. examples in chap. 5, 12, 15, and 17.

28 Cf. Scott, *The City-State in Europe*, 207.

resembles many of its Italian contemporaries in its struggles to combat factionalism and civil strife. Furthermore, while the scope of Genoa's economic achievement is unusual, the phenomena that enabled that success are more broadly familiar—it was not only Genoese merchants who became wealthy in the cloth and spice trades between England, Flanders, Italy, and the East. Genoa's negotiations with popes and emperors, the intricate relationships between its various strata of society as well as between city and countryside, its patterns of urban development and local resource management, its local cults and relations with the church at large, and the way its cultural trends reflect its particular circumstances—in areas such as these, the history of Genoa bears numerous similarities to that of other Italian cities of the period. The contributors to this volume have attempted to draw a fine line between highlighting the idiosyncrasies of Genoese history and noting the local manifestation of broader historical trends.

A final word on the organization of this *Companion*: the task of choosing chapter topics for a volume of this kind invariably requires difficult choices, since every potential chapter configuration brings out certain themes at the expense of others. It also runs the risk of compartmentalizing individual topics, conveying the implication that historical phenomena (political, economic, intellectual, religious, artistic, and so forth) developed independently instead of being profoundly interrelated. While this volume takes a fairly traditional approach to topic division, therefore—attempting to provide accessible and coherent surveys in the manner most likely to be useful to students and scholars—it also emphasizes connections between chapters. The richness of this historical tapestry will become clear to readers willing to follow cross-references and read more than one chapter even in pursuit of a single topic. Just as an example, while the medieval Genoese economy obviously plays a significant role in the volume—and receives a substantial chapter of its own (chap. 14)—other chapters demonstrate the numerous divergent yet entwined impulses behind its developments. Shifting sovereignties in the Eastern Mediterranean (chaps. 16–18); European state centralization (chap. 5); changing technologies in ship design, navigation, accounting, and bookkeeping (chaps. 15–16); relations between Latins and Greeks, Christians and Muslims (chaps. 5, 10, 12, 17, and 18); as well as family networks and social relations in Genoa, Liguria, and across the *Dominio* (chaps. 2, 6–8, 15, and 18) all influenced where and how the Genoese pursued their profits.

For the same reason, the volume repeatedly highlights historical patterns that play important roles in multiple chapters without having chapters specifically dedicated to them. The interplay between the city of Genoa, the Genoese people (however defined), and the vast Genoese empire/diaspora, for

example—which recurs in chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, and 14–18—poses conceptual, historiographical, and practical challenges while providing Genoese history with much of its richness and complexity. Conversely, the contributions of the numerous foreign (that is, non-Genoese) artisans, merchants, laborers, and slaves who made medieval Genoa a cosmopolitan melting-pot are a recurring theme of chapters 7, 9, 10, 14, and 18. Genoese sources also provide some of the best evidence for the everyday practice of Christian-Muslim relations in the Middle Ages (chaps. 3, 7, 8, and 14–18). These are important historical considerations, but it seemed preferable to integrate them across the volume as essential components of Genoese life rather than isolating them into separate chapters.

This approach seemed particularly important in the case of women: Genoa's meticulous accounts and notarial registers provide some of the best evidence we have for Genoese women and their participation in those practices. Rather than isolating “women's history” in a single chapter, however, the volume addresses the evidence for their lives and concerns in numerous chapters: most substantially in chapters 6, 7, and 13, but also in chapters 1, 3, 12, 14, 17, and 18. Thus readers will encounter both the stories and experiences of particular women—Ferraria of Albisola (chap. 2), the bride Aimelina Rataldo (chap. 7), the saint and mystic Caterina Fieschi Adorno (chaps. 12 and 13), the empress Adelaide (chap. 13), and the hospital matron Alda de Mirta (chap. 13)—along with the more abstract testimonies of countless anonymous wives, widows, daughters, slaves, nuns, and pious laywomen.

A final feature of the evidence and analysis presented in this volume is the scope they offer for further research. In numerous instances, authors note matters that remain under debate, the existence of sources yet to be analyzed or even inventoried, or cases where once-firmly-held beliefs have had to be entirely reassessed in the light of new evidence. Many of the areas inviting further research and analysis identified by authors of this volume rest on the same ongoing scholarly imperative: the cataloguing, editing, and analysis of the enormous quantity of source material that remains unexplored (discussed most explicitly in chapters 1, 6, and 7). The richness of the Genoese sources—chiefly notarial registers, but also statutes and other official registers—and the challenges posed by their wide distribution means that much of the surviving documentation remains unedited even now. As these materials are gradually explored and edited, they will contribute substantially to our understanding of issues such as: the extent and nature of Genoese hegemony across Liguria; the parallels between legislation and practice (for example, as regards laws of succession); the nature of social confederations such as the *alberghi* (and the

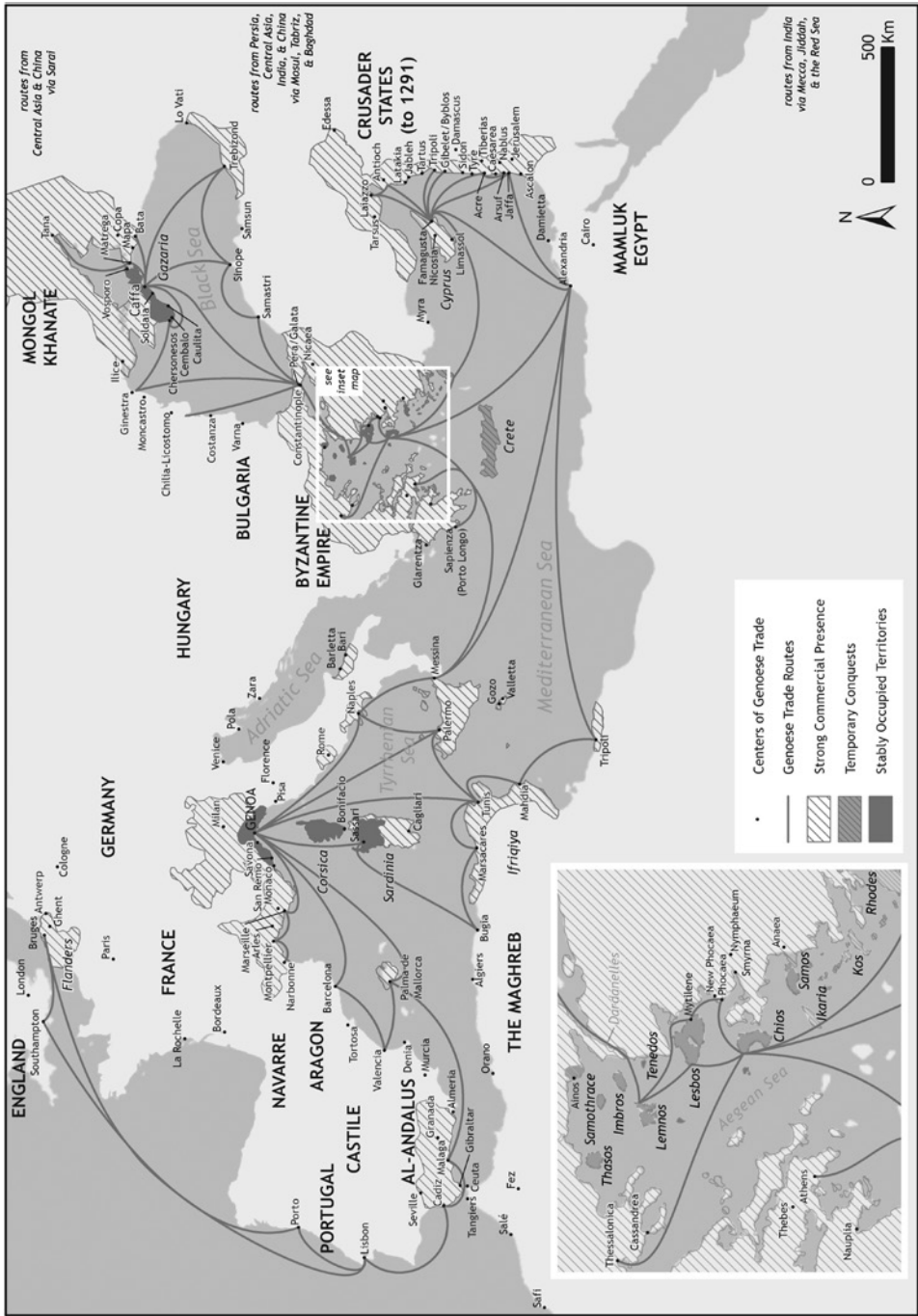
extent to which the lower classes participated in them); the social and economic roles of women, especially the challenge of identifying female agency; the treatment and integration of foreigners into Genoese society and (conversely) the problem of defining Genoese identity or identities in a world so dependent on long-distance travel. Yet the editing and analysis of the written sources will also contribute to other areas of research, such as those more dependent on physical evidence (such as archaeology, material culture, and art history), or those more focused on questions of motivation and cultural meaning: the extent to which Genoese trade-network- and empire-building was communally driven, or the motivations for Genoese involvement in the crusades. The volume must therefore be considered more an account of the present state of the field than an attempt to provide any definitive answers, but it is hoped that its contribution to the English-language scholarship on medieval Genoa will both assist and encourage further investigation.

Our *Companion* attempts to emphasize the complex relationships of people and groups at multiple scales—kin; neighborhood, guild, and confraternity; city and suburb; *districtus*, province, and region—and across multiple continents.²⁹ We have stressed not just the existence of these multiple groups but the effects of their overlapping and intertwining across such levels, and how they influenced their surroundings and circumstances. The many appearances of the Fieschi family throughout the volume, for example, demonstrate clearly the multiple levels on which its members affected events and decisions around them: while their main power base was in the Ligurian Levante where they held the imperial title of counts of Lavagna, the Fieschi maintained a strong presence both in Genoa and elsewhere in the *Dominio*. They are best known for their Guelf allegiance and ecclesiastical affiliations—the family produced one saint (Caterina Fieschi Adorno, also known as Saint Catherine of Genoa), two popes, three cardinals, one Latin patriarch of Antioch, and multiple archbishops of Genoa, as well as enough cathedral canons to dominate the twelfth-century chapter of San Lorenzo—but members of the family also served in numerous posts in the communal administration. They held extensive properties around the cathedral church of San Lorenzo in Genoa, along with fiefs in the *districtus* and throughout Italy, from Piedmont to the Kingdom of Naples, not to mention ecclesiastical benefices throughout western Europe.

29 They appear too frequently for neat cross-referencing, but even leaving aside economic issues, the political and social ties between the city (Genoa), region (Liguria), and international sphere (the world beyond) are discussed at length in chaps. 2, 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 16, 17, and 18, with their repercussions addressed in chaps. 1, 8, 10, and 11.

Stalwarts of Genoese long-distance trade, they participated in the *Mahone* of Phocaea and Chios and served as *massarii* (communal officials, treasurers) in its Black Sea colonies. In the extent of their influence and power, therefore, the Fieschi were certainly unusual, but the broad scope and multifarious nature of their commitments are entirely typical of the Genoese. The contributors to this volume have attempted to maintain awareness of that complexity throughout.

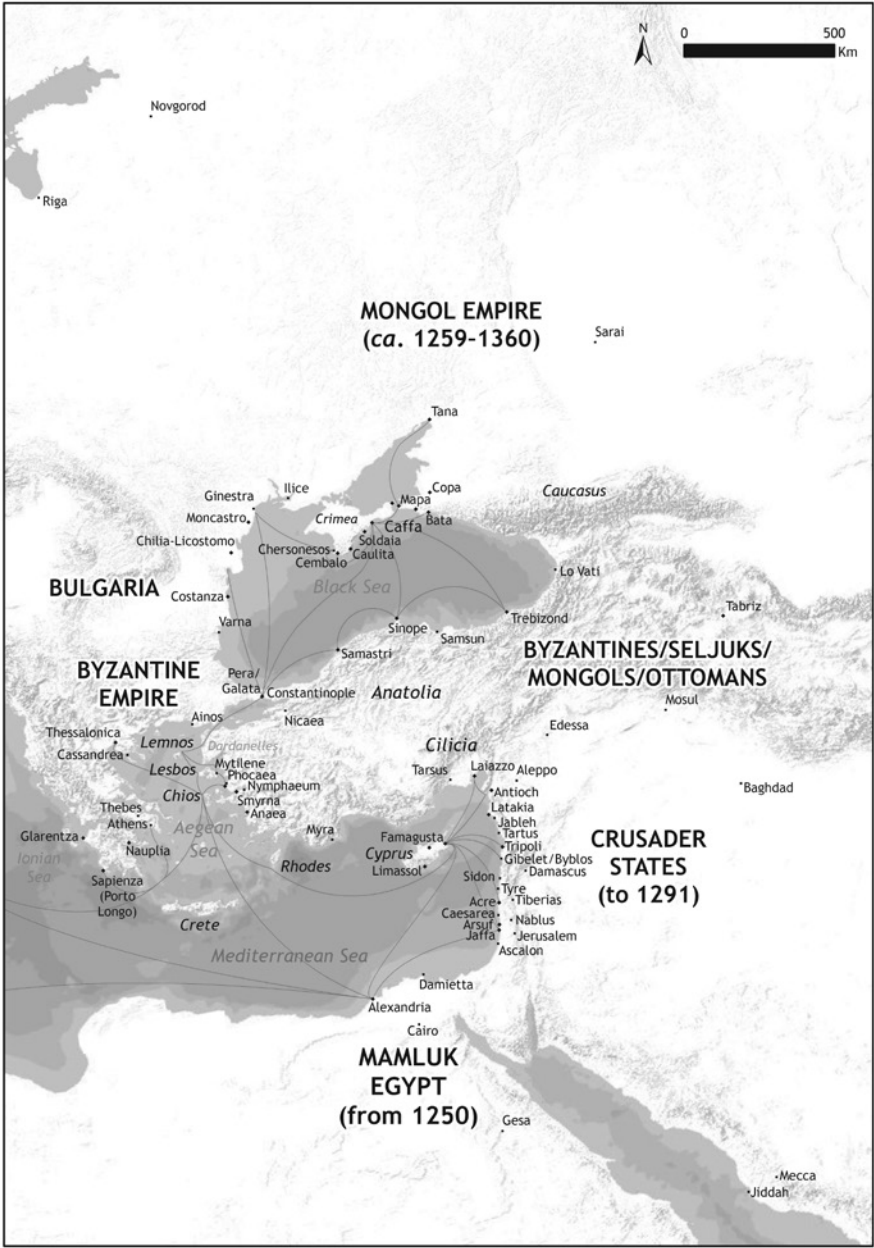
Maps



MAP 1 Genoese patterns of commerce and sea trade routes in the later Middle Ages.



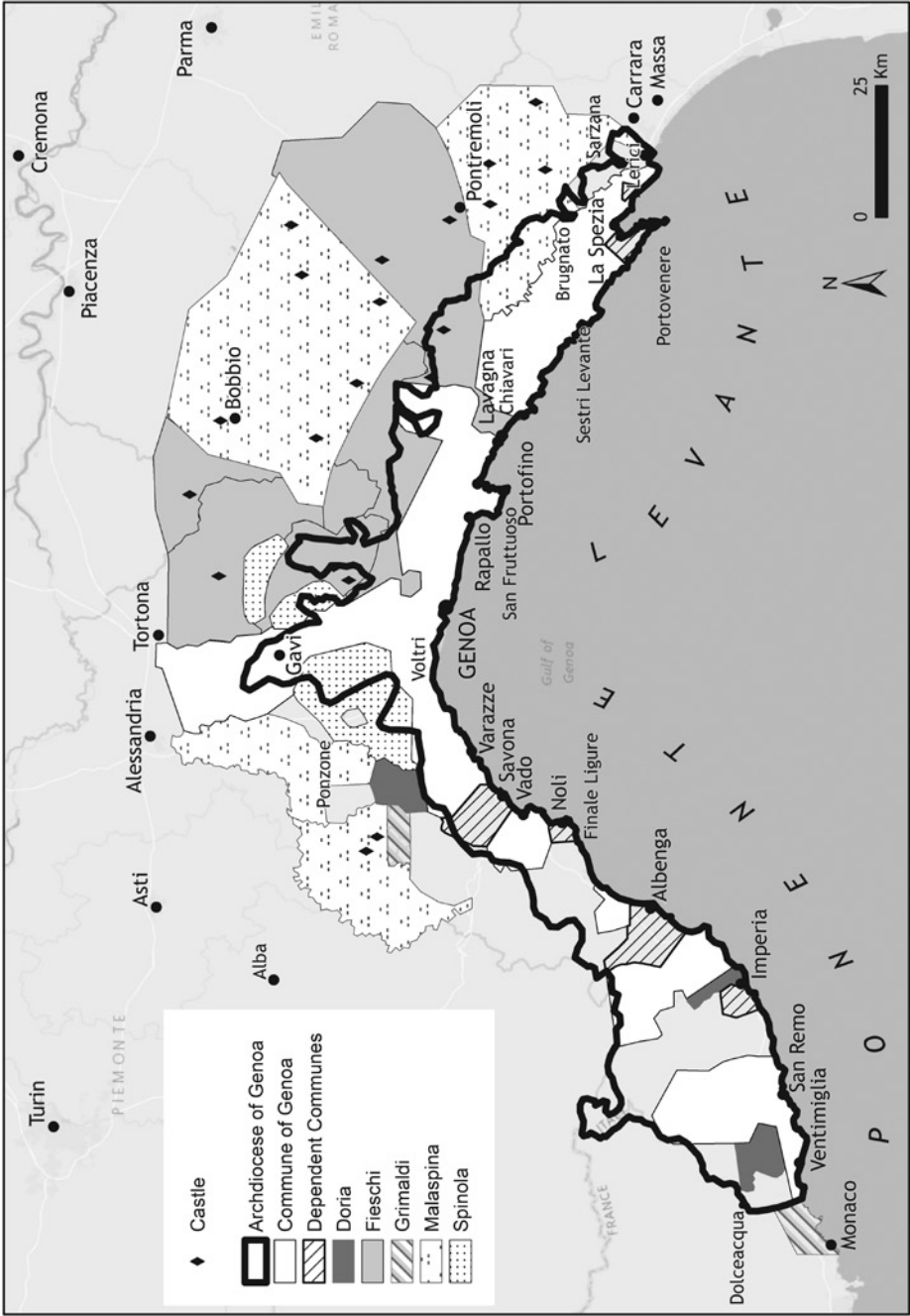
MAP 2A *Medieval western Europe and the western Mediterranean: terrain, regions, and cities mentioned in this book.*



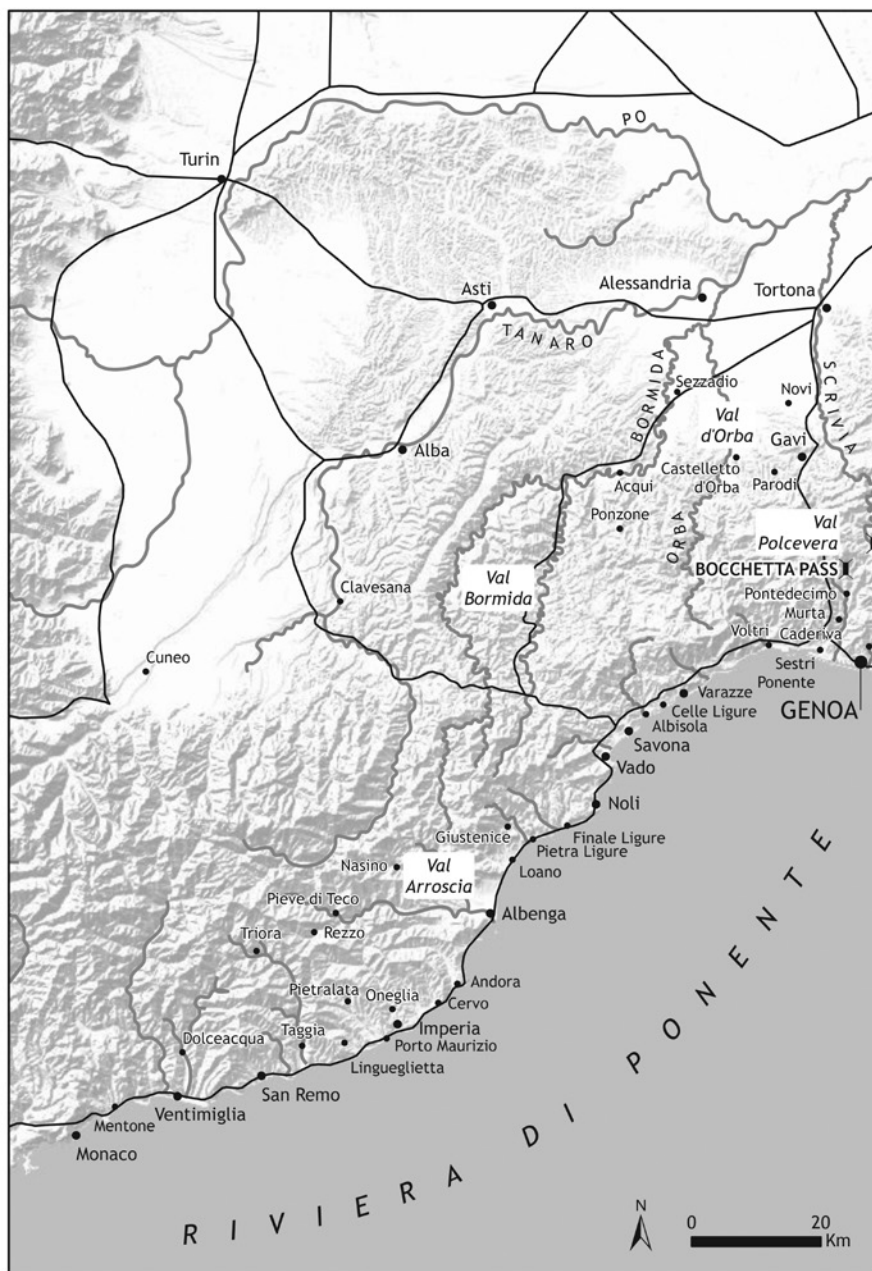
MAP 2B *Medieval eastern Europe, the eastern Mediterranean, and the Middle East: terrain, regions, and cities mentioned in this book.*



MAP 3 *Italy: terrain, modern regions, and major cities.*



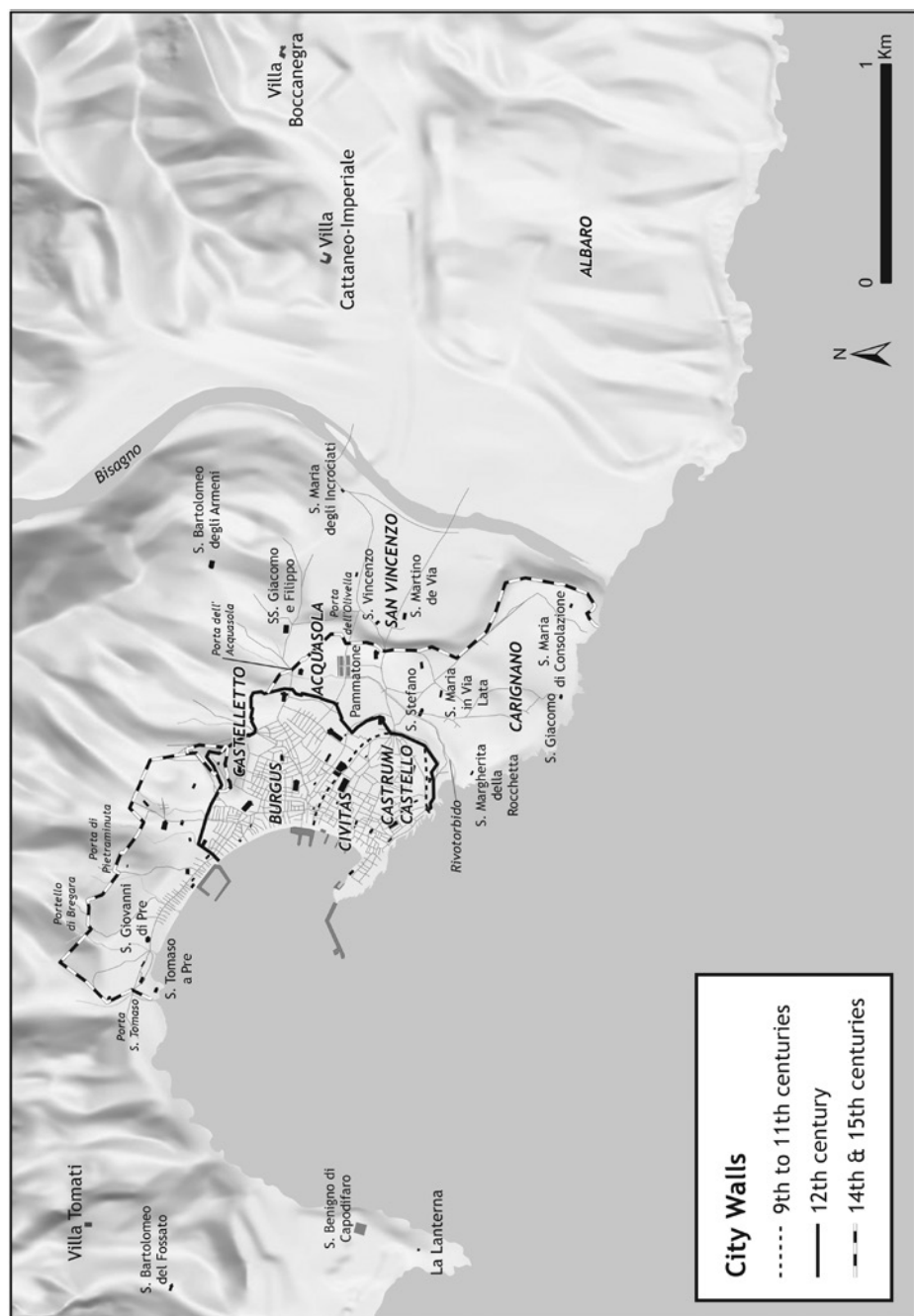
MAP 4 *Liguria in the late Middle Ages: territorial dependencies, major families' seigniorial estates, and the current borders of the archdiocese.*
LARGELY BASED ON GXV AND IELM, WITH A MODERN BASEMAP.



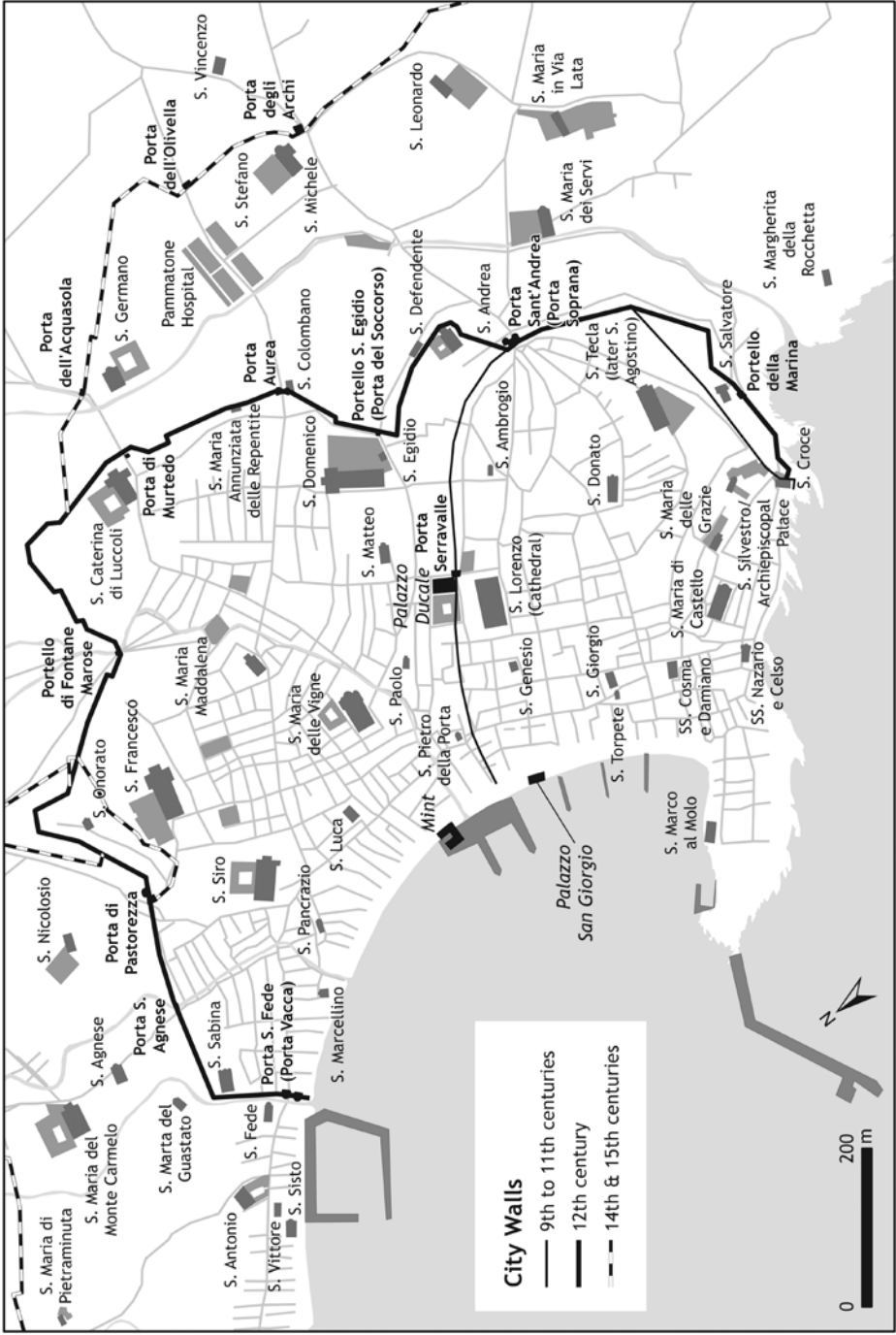
MAP 5A *The Riviera di Ponente: terrain, valleys and passes, major roads, and cities.*



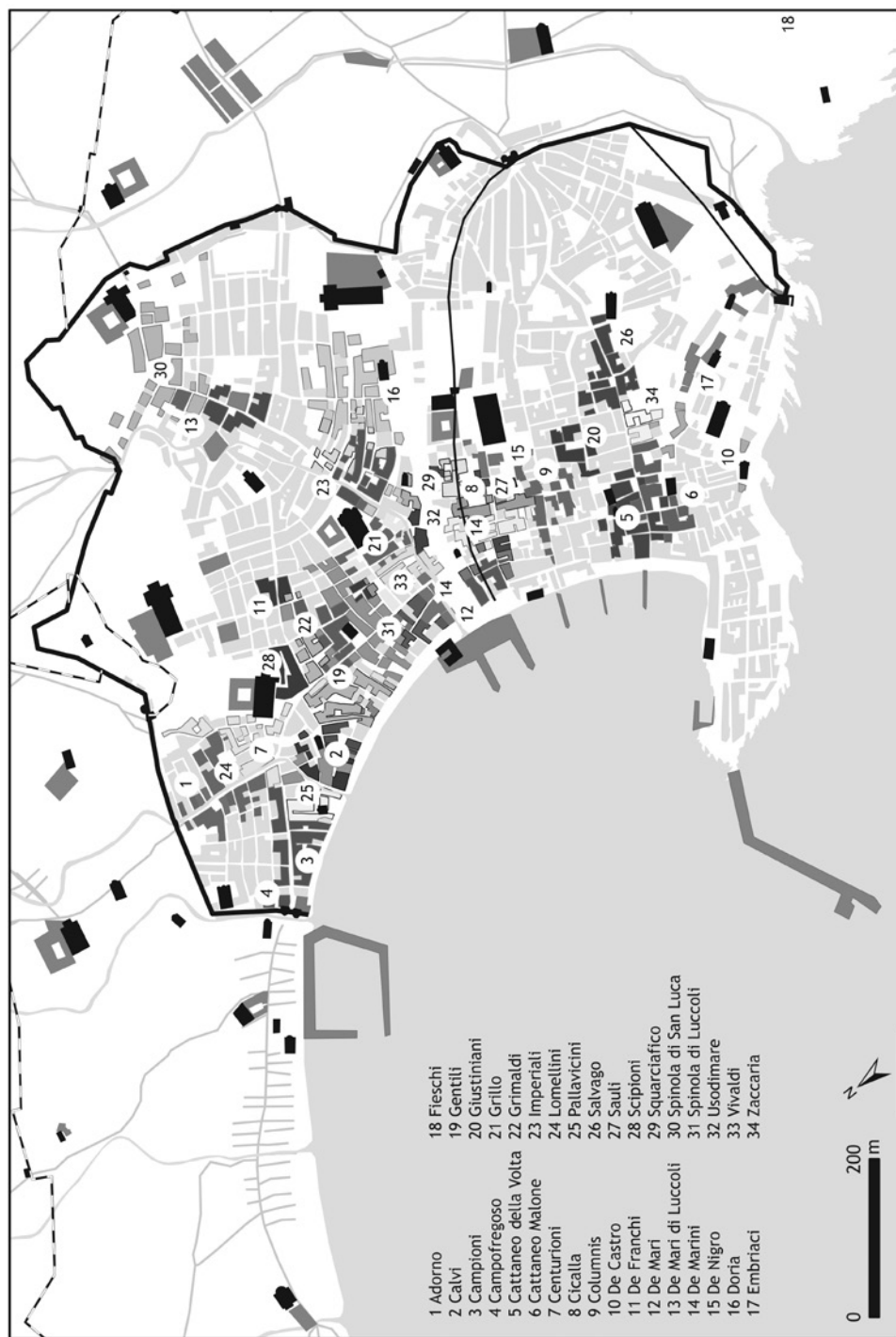
MAP 5B *The Riviera di Levante: terrain, valleys and passes, major roads, and cities.*



MAP 6 Medieval Genoa and its environs: areas of the city, city walls, and extramural villas and churches. Largely based on UCP and GMCI.



MAP 7 Medieval central Genoa: public buildings, churches, monasteries, and hospitals. Largely based on UCP.



MAP 8 Late medieval Genoa: building footprints and sites of major family enclaves. UCP.

PART 1

Orientations



The Written Sources

Sandra Macchiavello and Antonella Rovere

The long Saracen incursion of 934–5, a civil war involving the city's major families at the end of 1295, violent disorders in the wake of the election of the first doge Simone Boccanegra in 1339, the French bombardment of 1684, the transfer of entire archival collections during the Napoleonic period, and the rule of the house of Savoy: all are crucial episodes that have significantly influenced the landscape of medieval Genoese written sources.¹

It is widely accepted that the process of documentary transmission is complex, and calamities—even when well-documented—explain only the most extensive losses. Any evaluation of the current structure of the Genoese archives must take into account an intricate set of factors which come from both within and outside the institutions that have produced and/or preserved documentary material. Chance and necessity, inertia and action, produce changes that must be measured against a backdrop of successive political and socio-cultural shifts as well as economic, administrative, and procedural needs. We must also acknowledge the risk of overestimating the structural strength and efficiency of such institutions, since any institution is bound to its relationships with various social actors as well as to the available material and cultural resources. Finally, we should also consider that for certain periods and contexts, sources may not be extant today because they were never actually produced.

Given these premises, the extant textual sources for Genoese history in the Middle Ages invite two initial observations. On the one hand, unlike other major Italian cities, Genoa lacks documentary sources dating from before the 950s. The only exception is a document dated 916 copied in a twelfth-century episcopal register. On the other hand, Genoa has an extraordinary amount of documentation dating from the twelfth century onward. This abundance of sources confirms that the twelfth century constitutes a watershed marked by a remarkable increase in the quantity of documents; furthermore, it also highlights Genoa's precocity in the documentary realm. It was among the very first

¹ This chapter is the result of the collaborative work of Sandra Macchiavello (sections 1, 3 and 4) and Antonella Rovere (sections 2, 5 and 6). For a detailed recent synthesis of the various written sources left to us by medieval Genoese institutions, see *GMCI*.

cities to adopt the writing of communal annals, the collection of documents into registers (technically known as *libri iurium*), and the use of notarial registers. In this sense, 1122 constitutes Genoa's major turning point, since that is the year in which consuls began to be elected annually and in which the chancery was established. The concurrence of these two events is significant because the connection between the consular government, the chancery, and the notariate was the driving force behind all of Genoa's innovations in documentary production.

When evaluating the sites at which documentary materials are now preserved, we must consider what is preserved both in and outside the city. For Genoa, the state archives (the Archivio di Stato di Genova) preserve the fullest collection of documents. The Archivio di Stato is internationally renowned for its exceptional deposit of notarial cartularies, as well as an imposing number of registers pertaining to the first modern bank, the Casa delle Compere e dei Banchi di San Giorgio. Perhaps predictably, other materials valuable for both age and significance are scattered among other public and private archives and ecclesiastical libraries. With regard to the documentary material preserved outside Genoa: the city's tight and intricate network of relationships with other Italian cities as well as various Mediterranean and northern European centers has resulted in the dispersal of many documents—especially those produced by the Genoese government, such as treaties and conventions. Consequently it is difficult to trace all the documents preserved outside Genoa, and they remain largely unexplored.

Detailed surveys conducted by early modern antiquarians—some of whom transcribed quantities of original documents into monumental manuscripts—have filled out the Genoese documentary landscape.² However, these important investigations of sources have only been exploited by contemporary scholars in a few cases: for example, as part of an editorial project seeking to reconstruct the archive of the two most important urban monasteries of medieval Genoa, San Siro and Santo Stefano.

Editions of Sources

The editorial history of Genoese sources owes its success to the two cultural institutions which oversaw its development: the Società Ligure di Storia Patria (established in 1857) and the Università di Genova; while acting autonomously

2 For example, the nine manuscript volumes written by Abbot Bernardo Poch preserved at the Biblioteca Civica Berio, Genoa.

at times, the two institutions have often managed to work in synergy with particular effectiveness.³

The goal of publishing Genoese documentary sources—especially those pertaining to the medieval period—was one of the *raisons d'être* of the Società Ligure, and an objective common to the cultural associations of nineteenth-century Italy. Beginning with the enthusiasm of its promoters, who sought to bring to life the city's still largely unexplored past, this long-term initiative became a complex endeavor with an irregular trajectory, whose results were influenced by many factors.

During a long first phase that lasted almost fifty years, the scholars who gathered around the Società were mainly interested in choosing different types of documents about important events that were preserved in various archival collections and publishing them in imposing collections. Their chief aim was to find documents that could assist with historical research. The first signs that scholars were shifting their attention towards the source in itself and as a whole appeared by the middle of the twentieth century, when the heads of the Società, in collaboration with a group of American scholars, promoted a series (*Notai liguri del secolo XII*, "Ligurian Notaries of the Twelfth Century") designed to publish Liguria's oldest notarial registers. (The series later came to include a few thirteenth-century registers, discussed below.)

During the 1960s, with a revival of historical studies and the rise of diplomatic as an academic subject, the Società Ligure and the Università di Genova devised a project aimed at filling the gaps in a documentary landscape that was still essentially unedited in any systematic form. Partly as a consequence of close collaboration with the lecturers of the Università di Genova, the project quickly gained momentum, and many important goals have been reached in the last twenty-five years. The results of this editorial project have been published in two different collections: the first, *Notai liguri dei secoli XII e XIII* ("Ligurian Notaries of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," later extended to include sources up to the fifteenth century; here NL), represents the natural continuation of the earlier series of edited notarial sources; the second, *Fonti per la storia della Liguria* ("Sources for the History of Liguria," founded in 1992; here FSL), includes the imposing series of communal *Libri iurium* and the documentation for the urban monasteries, as well as a number of Ligurian statutes and their inventories.

The activities of the university, and more specifically of the Istituto di Medievistica (Institute of Medieval Studies), flourished for two decades and paralleled those of the Società Ligure, although the two institutions did not

3 On the editorial project devised by the Società: Macchiavello/Rovere, "Edizioni."

officially collaborate. Between 1969 and 1989, for example, the series *Collana storica di fonti e studi*, edited by Geo Pistarino (here CSFS), became a prestigious venue for the publication of editions of statutes, account ledgers, cartularies of churches and monasteries, epistolaries, and above all, notarial registers pertaining to Genoese notaries active in the Mediterranean colonies.⁴

These editorial projects have yielded extremely positive results both in terms of quantity and in the historical scope of the published editions. Almost all of the extant thirteenth-century communal and ecclesiastical documents have been edited, along with numerous other fourteenth-century documents. It is especially significant that editorial activity has gone beyond the thirteenth century, as this generally constitutes an endpoint for most editorial projects focused on other areas of Italy, which tend to be deterred by the overwhelming number of documents for the later period.

In spite of these accomplishments, much of the public documentation dating from the last two centuries of the Middle Ages remains unexplored, while even some that is better known is still unedited. In particular, the vast amount of documentation in register form—including the papers and account ledgers of the communal administration—has been investigated only partially by scholars who have produced analytical inventories of these sources. For ecclesiastical sources, the still-unedited material comprises a large series of documents collected in registers that a number of ecclesiastical institutions began to assemble from the mid-thirteenth century onward. For the most part these registers contain repetitive and monotonous types of documents concerning the management of land and other assets. This characteristic, along with the large number of extant documents, does not favor editorial initiatives seeking to consider this type of source as a whole.

Ecclesiastical and Monastic Sources

Like those in other contemporary areas of Italy—and perhaps even Europe—pre-twelfth-century Genoese documentary sources come almost exclusively from the milieu of the church. The written documents extant from this period pertain to the bishopric and two monasteries in the immediate suburbs of the city, San Siro to the east and Santo Stefano to the west.⁵

4 For a complete list of all the titles in the series (fifty-four volumes and an additional four published outside the series): Balletto, "Storia medievale," 508, n. 117.

5 Very few documents pertaining to the cathedral of San Lorenzo survive: only four documents (980–1098) copied in a register dating from the mid-thirteenth century, edited in *LPE*.

From a quantitative perspective, the extant sources are relatively few: 269 documents, including about forty that were not written by will of the institutions that preserved them. There are various reasons for the presence of these latter documents, which are preserved only in the two monastic archives: a small number of acts are documents written for dependent churches or hospitals attached to the monasteries. The other documents—usually defined as *munimina* (documents certifying the legitimacy of acquired property rights)—probably ended up in the *scrinia* (chests) as mere deposits, but as a general rule they were intended to certify ownership of a right or land. This common practice can be observed in all ecclesiastical and monastic cartularies, even those from a later period, and must be acknowledged in order to evaluate the actual documentary production of any institution.

Documents written in the period before 1100 generally register transfers of land, its uses, or rights connected to it. It is a select documentary corpus which scholars have studied extensively with particular attention to patrimonial and economic issues,⁶ although recent scholarship has also considered these documents from other, more diverse perspectives.⁷ We should also stress that most of the documentary sources predating the twelfth century have not been transmitted to us in their original form. Even though this phenomenon is generally acknowledged, it should be explained better and evaluated with care to avoid overestimation, as our sense of the overall picture has necessarily been affected by unreliable transmission processes.⁸

On this topic, the first notable characteristic that emerges from the cartularies of the monasteries of San Siro and Santo Stefano is that a good number of acts, especially the oldest ones, are only available as transcriptions or summaries compiled in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁹ As already noted, the surveys by antiquarians in these centuries have transmitted material which is no longer available to us in its original form; however, it is difficult to gauge if and to what extent their work also contributed to the loss of documents, partly because their aims and working methods—and even the scholars themselves who participated in this process—have not been sufficiently studied.

If we add episcopal sources to this number, we significantly increase the percentage of documents surviving only in copies. About a hundred acts (all *libelli*, lease contracts typical of the period, dating from 916 to 1086) were

6 For example: Polonio, “Spazi economici.”

7 Worthy of mention here is a prosopographic analysis of the period preceding the institution of the consulate: Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*.

8 *DAL*.

9 *CSS* and *CDSS*.

originally copied in a register which began to be compiled in 1143. Although this manuscript has been lost—except for twenty-seven folia assembled in no particular order¹⁰—it must be considered the episcopal curia's first cartulary of the communal period. The documents have nonetheless come to us through another register, a simple copy that also contains later documents covering the period to 1180 (about 180 miscellaneous documents in all).¹¹ This manuscript, which was not conceived according to notarial practices and techniques, can be dated between the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. It was certainly created to duplicate the older documentary collection, but it is difficult to establish the relationship of the extant copy and the original *liber* (book or register).

With this schematic overview, we can already identify the main characteristics of the Genoese documentary landscape during the twelfth century: an increase in the number of sources, the presence of different types of contracts, and the introduction of a more complex documentary system based on the use of registers.

Although the city and its suburb possessed a complex and close-knit network of churches, monasteries and convents, most of these institutions did not leave an archive. A partial reconstruction of lost archives is possible only through the painstaking investigation of other collections, particularly notarial archives. This type of approach is exemplified by attempts to reconstruct the documentary archive of the ancient church of Santa Maria di Castello (which was originally subject to the bishop), but this effort has yielded few results: only seventy-nine documents dating between 1185 and 1463.¹²

With regard to the monastic milieu, the available documentary material pertains to four institutions. The cartularies of the aforementioned monasteries of San Siro and Santo Stefano, which are preserved in the Archivio di Stato, contain an abundance of medieval and early modern documents. We can add to these the cartularies of two other institutions that are preserved in the private Bibliotheca Durazzo. These are from Sant'Andrea della Porta (fig. 6), a women's community whose origins cannot be easily traced, but whose cartulary contains documents dating from 1109 to 1370; and San Benigno di Capodifaro (originating from the monastery of Fruttuaria in Piedmont), whose cartulary contains documents dating from 1148 to 1460.¹³ These relatively modest

10 The fragment found recently in the Archivio Storico del Comune, Genoa, does not contain any documentary material from before the twelfth century: Calleri, "Storia del primo registro."

11 The first register (*rc*) is preserved in the Archivio di Stato, Genoa.

12 Vigna, *L'antica collegiata*.

13 Soave, *Carte di Sant'Andrea*; Rovere, *Carte di San Benigno*.

collections were preserved by the intervention of Giacomo Filippo Durazzo (1719–1812), a bibliophile and an important member of the Genoese aristocracy who foresaw the serious repercussions for the archives of religious orders following the Napoleonic suppression decree of 1799.

In the late thirteenth century a rich series of documentary collections in book form began to be added to the individual parchment documents of the monastic collections (with the exception of that of San Benigno). These books, each in a different state of preservation, have been the subject of recent research; this has furnished a comprehensive picture of their contents (which have now been edited), their structure, and the (chiefly economic) reasons for their creation.¹⁴

The practice of collecting documents in registers was inspired by the early, contemporary experiences of the bishop and the commune (discussed below), whose adventurous tendency to experiment had already produced important and influential results by the 1140s. With regard to the archbishopric, the decision to assemble documents into registers must derive from the economic policies enacted during the long episcopacy of Siro (1130–63, and first archbishop from 1133). In a climate of close cooperation with the commune, the archbishop had enough expertise and resources at his disposal to initiate the important project of reorganizing the estates of the diocese, which were scattered among several regions and mostly held by laymen.¹⁵ Following the successful completion of Siro's survey, his immediate successors continued to collect in books documents concerning the management of the episcopal patrimony, a practice that gradually became routine. This long-term program led to the compilation of the so-called "second register of the archiepiscopal curia," which, with its 392 documents almost entirely preserved in the original, covers the period from 1164 to 1274 uninterrupted.¹⁶

Later bishops abandoned the practice of collecting documents in registers: notaries and their protocols (which are still preserved in the notarial archive) provide the only means of retrieving most of the late medieval episcopal documentation. Recently, a search conducted in the notarial archives in response to a historical interest in curial notaries has identified a few notaries who worked

14 The existence of these two cartularies from San Siro has been proven thanks to indirect references provided by early modern antiquarians: Calleri, "Su alcuni libri."

15 For the results and impact of this reorganization on the documentation, see nn. 10 and 11, above.

16 *RC2*.

chiefly for ecclesiastical institutions.¹⁷ These explorations have yielded a mass of documents useful for observing the administrative and judiciary system of the episcopal curia; they are especially important given that there are no similar documents in the Archivio Storico Diocesano.¹⁸ The diocesan archive preserves a few synodal texts recorded in a small paper codex dating from the last half of the fifteenth century; these offer insight into a lively legal tradition, but only as far back as the fourteenth century.¹⁹ Research in other archives, especially in the archive of the cathedral of San Lorenzo (consisting chiefly of account ledgers, lists of churches, and archiepiscopal correspondence), has provided some modest additions to the corpus.²⁰

If the episcopal archive is generally disappointing, a more substantial and complex corpus of documents covering a much broader chronological span is preserved from the cathedral chapter. This situation echoes similar cases elsewhere, which suggests that cathedral chapters were generally more careful about preserving documents and better capable of doing so than the episcopal curia. About 450 loose parchment documents (still unedited) and a statutory text of about sixty chapters²¹ covering the period between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries provide a good overall picture of the history of the college of canons. The *Liber privilegiorum* (book of privileges), assembled around the 1220s and now extant in a copy from the fourteenth century, is the most important attestation to the undisputed political and economic importance of the cathedral chapter, which has been defined as a veritable "ecclesiastical senate."²² The register comprises a wide variety of documents dating from 980 to the fourteenth century: papal privileges, public documents (some of great political importance), documents regulating relations (not all of them peaceful) with the outside world, and a core of documents registering transfers of goods, attested by a large number of donations.

Here too the canons' desire to certify and preserve the development of the chapter's holdings step by step is reflected in their practice of collecting documents in registers. This custom led to the compilation of six registers

17 At present, three cartularies of notaries who worked for the archiepiscopal curia have been published: n. 46, below.

18 This is a fairly homogeneous documentary corpus characterized by repeated instances of a few common types of acts such as promotions to holy orders, establishment of chaplaincies, sentences issued by the ecclesiastical court, and acts concerning benefices, procurations, and the appointments of vicars and arbitrators.

19 Edited in Cambiaso, *Sinodi genovesi*.

20 For archival locations and bibliographical references: *GMCI*, 125–9.

21 Puncuh, "Più antichi statuti."

22 *LPE*.

containing an enormous mass of contracts (purchases, exchanges of property, *libelli*, various types of leases) that illustrate the institution's careful and flexible management of its assets from the mid-thirteenth until the turn of the sixteenth century. The chapter's meticulous attention to administration and management is also reflected in the creation and preservation of an extraordinary series of books referred to as *libri del massaro*, or books of the treasurer—a *massaro* was a canon who, like an *economo*, was entrusted with the administration of the resources and expenses of his institution. There are 130 of these *libri* merely for the period from 1316 (the date of the earliest one) to the end of the fifteenth century.²³

A persistent attention to controlling the production and preservation of documents is also evident in the case of the collegiate church of Santa Maria delle Vigne (the origins of which are uncertain, but probably date around the end of the tenth century). Its archive, which is still held *in situ*, preserves six medieval registers known locally as *livellari* (from *libelli*, the main type of contract contained in them). The registers span from 1223 to the end of the fifteenth century, and contain almost exclusively *libelli* contracts pertaining to plots of land (over which there were often privately-owned buildings) in the city and its immediate suburbs. The formation and development of the church's assets can be partially reconstructed from a small archival collection consisting of 222 parchment documents written between 1103 and 1392.²⁴

Like most medieval ecclesiastical and monastic sources, most of the contents of the Genoese documents are concerned with economic matters and the management of the institutions' holdings. Up to the end of the twelfth century, the production of documents was driven by the acquisition and consolidation of assets by donation, purchase, and exchange. From the thirteenth century onward, the estates of these institutions were relatively stable, so the more substantial sets of documents from this period concern their administration through various land-management contracts. The documentary landscape is further enriched by documents designed to settle conflicts, whose main terms and actors are fairly clear: conflicts with laymen were often caused by the failure of the latter to fulfill payment obligations, while tension with other ecclesiastical institutions was most often caused by disputes over parish rights. Such documents include preliminary acts intended to resolve a conflict (involving the election of arbitrators, witness statements, valuations, and

23 Boldorini, *Primo "Libro del massaro."*

24 Airal di, *Carte di Santa Maria*. The archive preserves a late medieval statute, edited in Boldorini, *Statuti del capitolo*.

procurations²⁵); but most of the documents register sentences or agreements in which—depending on the case—the urban magistracies, the archbishop's curia, and at times even the papacy intervened. Small series of different types of acts concerning the internal organization of the community further expand our understanding of the picture, which would otherwise be based mainly on information of an economic and financial nature.

Historiographical and Hagiographical Sources

As with documentary sources, until the eleventh century the panorama of Genoese narrative sources is dominated by the ecclesiastical tradition. Not much has survived, but the sparse evidence allows us to surmise that the production of such sources must have been well-established: the extant sources consist of a few hagiographies, whose precise origins are uncertain: the most we can say is that they were written by well-educated clerics between the second half of the ninth and the end of the eleventh century.²⁶

These texts narrate the *vitae* (lives) of the protobishops Valentine, Syrus, and Romulus, who were active between the fourth and eighth centuries, but cannot be placed precisely since the chronology becomes more clearly defined only from the mid-tenth century onward. These sources, whose narratives center on the classic urban trope of the bishop as *defensor* (defender) of the faith and his flock, have been transmitted through copies of lost texts and are available to us only thanks to the enormous editorial efforts of the Bollandists in the early modern period.

An early medieval date can probably also be assigned to another manuscript—now lost—narrating the life of another protobishop, Felix (fifth century). We only know of its existence because it is mentioned in the thirteenth-century *History of Genoa* by Jacopo da Varagine, who elsewhere rewrote the legend of Syrus, the much-revered patron saint of the diocese.²⁷ The work of Jacopo, a Dominican and archbishop of the city from 1292 to 1298, is especially important here, since his many works provide concrete evidence of an ecclesiastical and

25 A procuration (Latin *procuratio*) was a kind of notarial contract used for appointing a legal agent, like a power of attorney today.

26 For hagiographical sources: Polonio, "Identità ecclesiastica," 449–82. See chap. 11 for an overview of Genoa's chief historians and annalists (Caffaro, Jacopo da Varagine, Giorgio Stella), and their works.

27 JVC; Monleone discusses all of Jacopo's works (even those which cannot be attributed to him with absolute certainty) in his introduction (99–179).

religious literary tradition for which no other testimony exists. His extensive collection of hagiographical texts—the well-known *Legenda Aurea*, or *Golden Legend*²⁸—clearly grew out of a literary tradition that was already vibrant in the early Middle Ages. In fact, scattered evidence in Jacopo's work and certain late fifteenth-century chronicles suggests that this tradition already existed in its more important and innovative forms as early as the twelfth century.

Jacopo's *History* is unique among ecclesiastical chronicles, since similar contemporary works were usually more akin to lists or prosopographies of past bishops. Further, the work opens in 1295, a few years after the interruption of the civic annals, which began to be written in the early twelfth century; in the earlier period, therefore, the brilliant, precocious, and enduring achievements of the communal annalistic tradition may have inhibited the parallel development of historical works written by clerics. Given the focus and intent of Jacopo's *History*, the sections that narrate ecclesiastical events are most useful for Genoese history, particularly as these tended to be ignored by the civic annals. The fact that over forty manuscript copies survive, preserved in public and private libraries in and outside Italy, bears witness to the popularity of Jacopo's work through the eighteenth century.²⁹

Speaking of the civic annals: during the early decades of the twelfth century, the city and the commune provided the conditions capable of nurturing this unique innovation, which is the first secular historical work written in the Middle Ages. Its first author Caffaro originally took up this historiographical endeavor out of personal inclination, but the year 1152 served as a turning point: after a public reading of the text that Caffaro had written so far, the Genoese consuls decided the work should be continued as the true and official history of the city, and that the text should be included in the "acts" of the Commune and preserved in the communal archive. This last decision severely restricted the work's circulation and transmission—so much so, that the work has survived in only three medieval manuscripts: the most important codex, unanimously considered the authentic original produced by the Genoese chancery and the archetype from which the other surviving texts were copied, is preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.³⁰ The other two manuscripts, which date from the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively, are preserved in the Archivio di Stato in Genoa and the British Library in London.³¹

28 LA; GL.

29 On Jacopo's work, see also the discussions in chaps. 8, pp. 198–9 and 203–7, and 11, pp. 327–9.

30 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS lat. 10136.

31 ASG, Manoscritti restituiti dalla Francia, no. 3, and London, British Library Add. MS 12031.

After the *Annales Ianuenses* were publicly recognized as the official history of the city, the work was continued by four other authors, all of whom can be identified, up to the 1220s.³² Thereafter, for about sixty years (1224–79), the annals were compiled by a group of authors; at this point the *Annales* became official acts of the commune, and increasingly reflected the priorities of the ruling elites. From 1280 onward, the work seems to have been entrusted solely to the communal archivist Jacopo Doria, who continued the annals until 1293. As no annalist was appointed to succeed him, the end of the thirteenth century saw the conclusion of this formidable work of historiography. Over the course of these two centuries the style of the work varied considerably, an inevitable result of the different inclinations of each compiler (all notaries and officials of the commune) and their various aims and commitments, as well as the writing process itself.³³

The fifteenth century saw a second prolific phase of chronicle-writing by laymen, which flourished thanks to the Stella family of notaries and chancellors. It was Giorgio Stella who promoted the resumption of the *Annales* (now characterized by the more scholarly term *Genuenses*). Although Stella was never appointed official annalist, he traced the history of Genoa from its origins to 1405, thus providing us with at least partial knowledge of the city's history during the fourteenth century.³⁴ The absence of a chronicle covering the fourteenth century, in fact, heavily influenced Stella's reconstruction, forcing him to base his work on documents from the chancery, other civic chronicles, and the oral testimonies of eminent citizens. Moreover, Stella's familiarity with the ecclesiastical milieu is evident in his annals, as he provides information regarding important facts and individuals which otherwise would have been lost.

Giorgio's brother Giovanni was responsible for the section of the annals between 1405 and 1435, when the rule of the Visconti of Milan ended in Genoa. Giovanni Stella, whose work is less reliable than his brother's, transformed the annals into a sort of narration of, or comment on, events in which he himself had been involved or had witnessed. Thus the text contains news and miscellaneous information about external events, but omits important events that occurred in Genoa; some incidents are even repeated under different years.

32 Oberto Cancelliere (1163–73); Ottobono *scriba* (1174–96); Ogerio Pane (1197–1219); and finally Marchisio, also *scriba* (1220–24).

33 The complex structure of this lengthy historical work has been analyzed in detail by multiple generations of scholars from different backgrounds; for a bibliography current as of 2004, see Petti Balbi, "Cultura storica," 187–90.

34 AG. The work of the Stella brothers is discussed at length in chap. 11, pp. 330–33.

Upon his death, the annals passed, this time officially, to Giorgio's son Battista Stella, and he continued them until his death in 1461. Thereafter his papers passed to Gottifredo d'Albaro, who continued writing until 1477, but both his work and Battista's were lost shortly after their completion.

The first book of the *De rebus Genuensibus commentaria* (*Commentary on Genoese Events*)—the work of chancellor Bartolomeo Senarega, d'Albaro's successor and the last official annalist—suffered a similar fate. Only one section delineating a general picture of the main events of the years 1488–1514, including the voyages of Christopher Columbus, has survived, and the annalist comments on these with conventional moralism.³⁵ Senarega was the last to write an official chronicle: while this form of public history was born as a medium for expressing the civic commitment of a single individual, it was immediately accepted by Genoa's communal institutions, whose officials understood its importance for manufacturing and fostering consent in the civic sphere.

Communal Sources

More than almost any other Italian city, Genoa preserves communal documents that enable us to trace the city's political and institutional history from as early as the twelfth century. At the same time, these sources underscore the government's constant and thorough attention to record-keeping.³⁶ Important documents have been preserved precisely because the officials of the Genoese government were aware of the value of safeguarding the oldest and most important records of internal and external policies (imperial diplomas, papal privileges, pacts, conventions, and treaties) as well as those of the city's administrative and judiciary bodies (sentences, decrees, and various regulations).

As early as the 1140s, the commune, paralleling a similar initiative by the urban church (discussed earlier), confronted this issue concretely by deciding to gather all documents of fundamental importance in a series of volumes to avoid the deterioration that would ensue from frequent consultation and the loss of documents stored haphazardly in sacks or chests. The volumes compiled in this way are the so-called *libri iurium*, which today are one of the main "repositories" by which thousands of documents have come down to us.

The series includes numerous volumes (twelve, including various duplicates) which extend beyond the medieval period into the seventeenth

35 Senarega, *De rebus Genuensibus*.

36 With a few exceptions specified above, all of the communal documentation is preserved at the Archivio di Stato, Genoa.

century.³⁷ While the oldest extant volume began to be compiled in 1253, indirect references prove the existence of three preceding collections (the oldest dating from around 1146). Only a few documents from these, however, are included in the extant volumes.

The collection which began to be assembled in 1253 and its three duplicates have been edited recently,³⁸ while the edition of the subsequent collection of documents, which dates to the second half of the fourteenth century (and of which there are two duplicates) is nearly complete.³⁹ These editions will provide scholars with an impressive corpus of medieval documents (the third collection, still unedited, dates from 1429 to 1514). A numeric breakdown may give a more precise idea of the extent of these collections: the first collection alone contains 1274 documents covering the period 958–1392 (with an increase in documents from the thirteenth century, and continuous coverage into the early years of the fourteenth century), while the second, smaller collection contains 399 documents dating from 962 to 1424, mainly from the fourteenth century.

The choice to gather into a volume those documents that the commune believed it important to preserve inevitably entailed careful choices about what should be kept and what could be discarded—either because it no longer had legal validity, or it was deemed to be of secondary importance, or other unknown reasons. Thus, on the one hand, these procedures have assisted the preservation of a documentary legacy which would probably have been lost if left in its original repositories. On the other hand, however, the dispersal of most of the original acts written on parchment prevents us from evaluating the full scope and precise characteristics of the commune's documentary corpus.

Other extant parchment and paper documents concerning Genoese domestic and foreign policy—some of them only in draft form—supplement the corpus gathered in the *libri iurium*. These documents are preserved in the collection *Materie politiche: Privilegi, concessioni, trattati diversi e negoziazioni* (Political matters: Privileges, concessions, various treaties and negotiations). The series contains 1435 documents from the tenth century to the fall of the Ligurian Republic in 1805; except for a good number of documents present also in the *libri iurium*, these remain unedited, but they are available in summary form.⁴⁰

37 One of the examples of the second collection is preserved at the Biblioteca Universitaria di Genova (the main library of the Università di Genova).

38 *LI*.

39 At present only the first of three volumes has been published.

40 Lisciandrelli, *Trattati*.

Caffaro records that the earliest nucleus of the Genoese chancery was created in 1122; almost immediately, the institutions of the government started gathering its acts, registering them, and organizing them in dedicated volumes. Once again they chose to collect their documentation in book form, since the codex's rigidity and sturdiness would guarantee the preservation of documents and facilitate consultation. Unfortunately the oldest volumes have been lost: it is only through the *libri iurium* that we know of the existence of the *libri consulatus* (books of the consuls), *libri potestatie* (books of the *podestà*), and *libri iteragentium* (books of consuls or *podestà* traveling on business outside Genoa), which contained transcriptions of documents organized according to the branch of government that produced them. Registers recording the deliberations of government bodies are only extant for the period after 1375; these are preserved in the *Diversorum* series which contains the minutes of the meetings of the doge and the *anziani*. Complementing this material, the *Litterarum* series preserves drafts of government letters from 1411 onward.

The documentation of the more strictly administrative branches of the communal government remains substantially unedited. This comprises a few collections useful for investigating economic and financial matters, and for retrieving important data about the magistracies that oversaw these matters, the commune's building activities, and its management of some of the most important civic activities. One of these collections preserves the account ledgers of the *Padri del comune e conservatori del porto e dei moli* (Fathers of the commune and conservators of the port and docks); this magistracy was established at the end of the thirteenth century with the aim of preserving and improving the harbor, but progressively extended its authority over other sectors, especially urban planning and construction.⁴¹ These registers, the oldest of which dates back to 1412, reveal the framework of the communal administration and are further enriched by two other imposing collections containing documents, even in this case relative to the late medieval period, on economic and financial matters.

The first collection, today known as the *Antico comune* (Ancient commune), comprises about eight hundred archival items. The various registers, account books, ledgers, and *matricole* (registers containing membership lists of a corporation or association) that constitute this collection illustrate the work of the many offices, magistracies and associations (about seventy-eight in all) charged with the maintenance and improvement of a number of urban and

41 All of the registers in this series are preserved at the Archivio dei Padri del Comune e Conservatori del Porto e dei Moli in the Archivio storico del Comune, Genoa.

extra-urban projects.⁴² The second colossal collection—the *Casa delle compere e dei banchi di San Giorgio*—contains about 39,000 archival items (registers, *filze*, and bundles) covering the four centuries during which this establishment, which developed mostly during the early modern period (1407–1805), was operative. For the medieval period, the most relevant materials are those regarding the *Debito pubblico* (public debt) and the *Banchi e tesoreria* (banks and treasury).⁴³

Regarding statutory sources, which are addressed in chapter six of this volume, suffice it to mention here that, as opposed to the richness of other types of material, only sporadic or fragmentary attestations have come down to us from before the end of the thirteenth century. Despite these huge lacunae, we can nonetheless trace the evolution of Genoa's legislative framework—from consular *brevia* to the later statutes—thanks to indirect references in different sources (first and foremost in the *Libri iurium* and annals).

Notarial Cartularies

The most important—and indeed, unique—type of source in this rich documentary landscape is the imposing repository of notarial cartularies preserved in the Archivio di Stato: six cartularies from the twelfth century, 113 cartularies from the thirteenth, 332 cartularies and *filze* from the fourteenth, and 785 cartularies from the fifteenth. These are imposing numbers, especially for the earlier centuries, and in particular for the twelfth century, when notarial practice reached its apex—or, better, the culmination of a long history with its roots in classical Greece. It was precisely in the first half of the twelfth century, in fact, that the office of notary acquired *publica fides* (public trust): that is, notaries' trustworthiness began to be recognized publicly by the highest authorities (who retained the right to appoint them) and local institutions (who availed themselves of the notaries' technical knowledge and authenticating function), as well as by private clients.

The adoption of a new system for registering acts is not only one of the most important technical innovations in the production of documents, but also a direct consequence of the notaries' attainment of *publica fides*. Notaries started to use registers called *manuali* (notebooks) and *cartolari* (cartularies) in Genoa: a notary would use a *manuale* to write a draft of a contract in the

42 For an inventory and analysis of this collection: Polonio, *L'amministrazione*.

43 *Inventario dell'Archivio del Banco di San Giorgio*. See the archive's website, which also contains its inventory: www.lacasadisangiorgio.it.

presence of the participating parties. This was a synthetic and occasionally messy version of the contract, full of corrections, deletions and additions. The text would then be written in a complete and orderly form in a cartulary; this version would be very similar if not identical to the text contained in the *mundum*, the document possessing full legal value, which was copied from the version in the cartulary and which the notary gave to his clients. Each notary preserved his *manuali* and cartularies until his death, when his registers would pass to a colleague or be deposited in an archive. These systems of writing and preservation meant that clients could obtain original copies of their documents any time they wished, without having to request a copy upon stipulation of the contract.

Another important development in the practice of writing private documents occurred at the turn of the fifteenth century: notaries began using the so-called *filza*, which first supplanted the *manuale* and later became a single object fulfilling the functions of both *manuale* and cartulary. The *filza* or *foliacicum* consists of a collection of sheets of paper or bi-fold sheets (folded lengthwise into two) each containing the first draft (*imbreviatura*) of one or more documents. Once the notary thought he would no longer use the *imbreviature* contained in the bundle, he would give the *filza* a compact shape by passing a hemp string with a metal tip attached at its end through a small hole at the center of the sheets. In order to preserve the outer sheets, two parchment or cardboard sheets were placed at either end of the bundle, which was closed by tying a knot in the string at the center.

The Archivio di Stato preserves the first extant cartulary, which must have been one of the first produced: the register of the notary Giovanni, scribe of the commune, known as Giovanni *scriba*, whose cartulary begins in 1154.⁴⁴ Five more cartularies survive for the same century: these are the only extant cartularies of this age in Italy and Europe, with the exception of a single register from Savona which dates from 1178 to 1188.⁴⁵ From a general perspective, the number of cartularies dating from the thirteenth century that are preserved in the Archivio di Stato—13—is also significant: at the present state of knowledge, these amount to more than all the cartularies preserved in other Italian

44 This cartulary, which quickly captured the attention of numerous scholars, was transcribed and published for the first time in the mid-nineteenth century, but the edition was so widely criticized that a century later a new edition was published (Chiaudano/Moresco). Unlike in the first edition, where the acts were presented in chronological order, the second edition preserved the cartulary's original structure.

45 *Cartulario di Arnaldo Cumano e Giovanni di Donato*.

archives combined. The number of cartularies from later centuries which are preserved in Genoa increases progressively.

Among the various factors that guaranteed the preservation of this massive number of registers, the commune's early decision to preserve the cartularies of deceased notaries by depositing them in a dedicated archive was crucial. Another important factor was the equally precocious establishment, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, of the Genoese notarial archives, which despite certain misadventures have allowed for the preservation of a good percentage of the cartularies that were produced.

Time and the vicissitudes of the archives in which such notarial cartularies were deposited have inevitably left their mark on their pages: wide abrasions on the margins, various types of stains (mostly due to damp), moth-holes, and other damage make large sections of many cartularies difficult to read. Damages upon damages accumulated until the French bombardment of Genoa in 1684, an event which caused massive disarray among the bundles of sheets written by different notaries, which most probably had not been bound in volumes. These loose sheets were gathered and bound into registers rather hastily and perfunctorily by two *iuvines* (youths) who were entrusted with the task of putting the damaged cartularies back into their original order.⁴⁶

Each cartulary contains several hundreds of documents covering one or more years (as many as ten), according to each notary's pattern of work, which means that the total number of contracts reaches into the millions. Obviously this is a priceless documentary heritage not only because of the sheer numbers, but also because of the vast array of contract types which the documents transmit. The resourceful inhabitants of this burgeoning maritime city—women as well as men—availed themselves of notaries on various occasions, primarily to draw up credit-based commercial transactions such as loans, partnerships, and *commenda* agreements. These types of agreements attest to the Genoese presence in the most important commercial entrepôts of Europe and the Levant, where Genoese notaries were also active. Upon their return to Genoa, these notaries brought their registers with them, which provides us with details of the activities of both Genoese and non-Genoese in areas outside Genoa.⁴⁷

46 During the last century, Costamagna (*Cartolari notarili*) and Bologna (*Cartolari notarili genovesi*) carried out the immense task of inventorying fragments of acts drawn up by numerous notaries from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. The inventory of the cartularies and *filze* up to the fifteenth century is almost complete.

47 Numerous cartularies of Genoese notaries who worked in the colonies have been published in the *Collana storica di Fonti e studi* (CSFS); these notaries were active between the thirteenth and fifteenth century in Caffa, Chilia, Chios, Cyprus, Famagusta, Laiazzo,

Together with these commercial documents, the registers contain sales contracts, *libelli* and other types of leases, apprenticeship contracts, wills, dowries and many other types of agreements. But people also turned to notaries to solve interpersonal disputes such as quarrels between spouses—as, for example, in a case in which a husband committed himself not to strike his wife (at least not to the extent of putting her life in jeopardy), or another in which a man promised not to have any extramarital affairs (at least not in the area which extended to Portofino). Similarly, parents and their children formalized their reciprocal obligations through notarial deeds. To cite one example: a son promised his father that he would not play dice, but if he did, he promised not to lose more than a certain amount of money per day. These documents bring to life the streets of a prosperous city: snippets of life emerge that shed new light on people's daily activities which would have been lost if these pages had not been preserved.

Moreover, some of the documents produced by the commune and episcopal curia have also been preserved in these notarial registers: when notaries were appointed to public posts, they continued to serve private clients, using a single cartulary to record private and public documents without separating the different acts into different volumes or sections of a volume. The fact that notaries preserved these documents—which were later deposited in the notarial archives, and not in the repositories of these two institutions—has preserved an additional group of public documents.

George Bratianu once compared Genoese cartularies to the Egyptian papyri, and like papyri the cartularies can be analyzed for different purposes by scholars pursuing a wide array of research interests. As early as the nineteenth century Italian and foreign scholars became aware of the immense value of these documents; as a result, while they used the cartularies for historical research, they also quickly acknowledged the benefits of analyzing them in their entirety by publishing complete editions.

A group of American economists led by Hilmar C. Krueger and Robert L. Reynolds of the University of Wisconsin–Madison has been instrumental in the publication of Genoa's oldest cartularies. Intensely interested in notarial sources, these two scholars actively participated in the edition of the twelfth-century cartularies in the series *Notai liguri del secolo XII* ("Twelfth-Century Ligurian Notaries") sponsored by the Società Ligure di Storia Patria (discussed

Licostomo, Pera, and Tunisia, as well as in Calvi and Bonifacio on Corsica. For the bibliographic details of these cartularies (fourteen volumes in all): Balletto, "Storia medievale," 508nn17.

above).⁴⁸ The long process leading to the publication of all of the twelfth-century cartularies is now substantially complete: the remaining cartularies of Oberto *scriba* and Oberto Piacentino are close to completion. Now that age is no longer the only criterion by which registers are chosen for publication, however, it is difficult to identify priorities and make decisions guiding the further editorial activity of these extensive documentary repositories, which are so rich that the goal of producing a systematic series of edited volumes is unfeasible. Two approaches are reflected in the most recent publications: on the one hand, the publication of the registers of notaries who worked for the archbishop's curia, a priority aimed at addressing recent scholarly interest in the figure of the "curial notary";⁴⁹ and on the other hand, the continued publication of the oldest registers: namely, the remaining cartularies of the notaries active between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, which are close to completion. In fact, the efforts of several Italian and foreign universities are presently directed towards a common project (*Notariorum itinera*), and their collaboration will enable editorial activity to proceed more rapidly, to make available to scholars as much as possible of this documentary heritage—endowed with enormous potential, but substantially unexplored. The volumes resulting from this editorial initiative will be collected in a new series (also called *Notariorum itinera*) and published online on the Società Ligure's website, thus providing the material with immediate access and easier consultation.⁵⁰

From the twelfth century, therefore, the panorama of Genoese written sources began to undergo an impressive expansion—we might even characterize it as an explosion—that parallels developments in other Italian communes of the period. The sheer quantity of extant written material contributes to our understanding of this transformation, which was not only political but also

48 Apart from the introductory volume by Moresco/Bognetti, *Per l'edizione dei notai liguri*, the following have been published: *Oberto scriba de mercato* (1190); *Guglielmo Cassinese* (1190–92); *Bonvillano* (1198); *Oberto scriba de mercato* (1186); *Giovanni di Guiberto* (1200–1211); *Lanfranco* (1201–26). On the relationship between American and Genoese scholars, and the complex work of transcribing the sources: Macchiavello/Rovere, "Edizioni," 46–9.

49 *Stefano di Corrado di Lavagna*; *Nicolò di Santa Giulia di Chiavari*; *Simone di Francesco de Compagnono*.

50 A cartulary of one of the notaries active between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries has been already published in this series: *Cartolare di Guglielmo da Sori*. The series will eventually include not only Genoese notarial cartularies, but also notarial sources preserved in other areas in and outside Italy, as well as other sources useful for the study of notarial practices (formularies, statutes, *matricole*), monographs, and other aids such as inventories and catalogues.

cultural and anthropological, and encourages us to acknowledge the crucial social function of writing and record-keeping in it. In this close collaboration between writing and authority, notaries played a pivotal role in constructing civic power as well as in formalizing legal relationships between private individuals.

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Genoa and Liguria

Paola Guglielmotti

In this chapter I propose to address certain aspects of the relationship between the small Italian region of Liguria and its chief city (see maps 4 and 5). I will concentrate mainly on the late medieval phase, when this relationship took effective shape through a laborious process. After a brief introduction highlighting the region's distinctive traits and following an outline of the ninth through eleventh centuries, I will concentrate my analysis on the twelfth century, which must be considered the formative phase of the medieval region. By contrast, I have chosen to delve into only a few aspects of the Genoese commune's attempts to construct and organize a subject territory during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the medieval region underwent a stabilization that was both troubled and ultimately incomplete, at least by modern standards.

Between Uniformity and Dissimilarity

The present region of Liguria more or less coincides with the territory over which the Genoese commune sought to assert its control from as early as the twelfth century. Today, the port city of Genoa has long since lost the role that it developed during the Middle Ages as a fundamental economic and commercial driving force in the Mediterranean basin: this first consideration suggests that we should not view the city's excellent location merely from a maritime perspective. Genoa—from which on clearer days one can glimpse the rugged coastline of Corsica to the south—is situated at the center of an arched coastline joining the Italian peninsula to what is now the southern French coast. Its position is strategic, but only potentially so, for it has a kind of counterweight in the narrowness of the Ligurian coastline.

The territory, which is essentially homogenous, is no more than forty kilometers wide since the region is bounded by two mountain ranges that in certain points almost touch the Ligurian Sea. The furthest spurs of the Maritime Alps to the west and the Apennines to the east rarely exceed nine hundred meters in height, with only one of the summits reaching 1800 meters. Thus the region does not possess wide, level land areas, the only one being the territory surrounding the town of Albenga. Its urban centers, all founded in Roman

times, are irregularly distributed: the other Ligurian cities—namely Savona, Albenga and Ventimiglia, seats of ancient bishoprics but still sparsely populated today—are all located in the western part of the region, which is divided into two Rivas of roughly equal length, known as the Levante (the eastern Riviera) and the Ponente (the western Riviera). This urban arrangement has remained unmodified up to today.¹

The limitations of the territory have inclined the inhabitants of the region in two different directions, according to a long-term pattern that has generally been considered a stable element of regional identity. On the one hand they have exploited the land in every possible way, both by integrating the productive activities of coast and interior and by creating the terraced fields—difficult to date and partly ruined due to lack of maintenance—that characterize the region's landscape. On the other hand, they have invested heavily in seafaring and especially in commerce. Nonetheless, we should not assume that these activities derived from a spontaneous maritime vocation, since Liguria possesses very few natural ports (the most striking exception being Vado-Savona). In this sea-facing region, in which most of the harbors are exposed to southern winds, seafaring has been an arduous endeavor, one made possible by the construction of jetties and other barriers and not always crowned with enduring success.²

On the threshold of the early modern period—and in Genoa's case the reforms introduced by Andrea Doria in 1528 signal an ideal endpoint for the Middle Ages—the construction of "Liguria" was still at least partly an intention, not unlike what has been argued for other Italian regions. At least from a commercial and monetary perspective, it is certainly true that the region had the strongly unifying feature of the almost exclusive use of a common currency (the *genovino*), as is evident from documents dating from as early as the thirteenth century. Nonetheless, in order to establish immediately that the region was not a compact strip of land controlled by its main city but rather a combination of peculiar situations variably coordinated by Genoa, it may be useful to cite two cases, of differing size but both located in the heart of Liguria. First, neighboring Savona, which had always resisted domination by Genoa, became in 1461 the base for French troops who, against the backdrop of the fluctuating

1 Imperia is also located in the western Riviera: a major city about halfway between Albenga and Ventimiglia, Imperia originated in 1923 when Oneglia was merged with Porto Maurizio. For a description of the region and the myths connected to it (and for further bibliography) see Quaini, "Segno di Giano."

2 As an introduction see Doria/Massa Piergiovanni, *Sistema portuale*; more recently, Basso, "Navi, uomini e cantieri."

subjection of Genoa to foreign powers, were planning to occupy the chief city. This happened some twenty years after Savona was sacked by the Genoese, who concluded their feat by infilling the harbor.³ Second, Rezzo, a village in the interior of the Ponente, was still subject to a co-seigneurial regime at the beginning of the sixteenth century. An enclave caught between multiple political actors, each with a different relationship to Genoa, the community of Rezzo was still struggling at that time to curb the autonomy of the local lords, the del Carretto and Clavesana marquesses. Both marquesses had interests in what is now southern Piedmont as well as in other areas of the Riviera di Ponente, and the latter were connected to the Doria clan, a powerful Genoese family which had expanded beyond the city and managed to insert itself politically into relatively limited yet important areas, above all the Ponente.⁴

In any case, despite its meager territorial area, by the twelfth century the region had already lost uniformity with regard to ecclesiastical jurisdiction: in 1133 Genoa was elevated to an archdiocese comprising three districts in Corsica as well as the monastic dioceses of Bobbio in the Ligurian-Piacentine Apennines and Brugnato in the Ligurian Levante.⁵ After this intervention by Innocent II, the region's other dioceses of Savona and Ventimiglia continued to be subject to the metropolitan see of Milan,⁶ while approximately thirty years later at the turn of the thirteenth century the diocese of Albenga was also added to the Genoese archdiocese. In 1239 a diocese was established in Noli, a borough west of Savona that was politically important despite its modest size and small population. Specifically, since the diocese of Noli was directly subject to the Genoese church, Liguria's chief city could put pressure from both sides onto its neighbor and rival Savona, projecting onto an ecclesiastical plane a rivalry that already existed on economic, political and military levels.⁷ No other concrete contribution to the construction of medieval Liguria on the part of the Genoese church can be detected—a situation far different, it is important to stress, from what has been attested for northeastern Italian ecclesiastical principalities, or subregions devoid of cities.

3 Petti Balbi, "Tra dogato e principato," 301. I will not refer again to this up-to-date synthesis in my overview of the developments of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This study, which also considers the relationship between Genoa and Liguria, is useful for bibliographical references covering the entire period considered in the present chapter; see also Shaw, "Genoa."

4 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 152–61.

5 For an ecclesiastical history of Genoa (and also for the discussion that follows): *IELM*.

6 Savona and Ventimiglia were incorporated into the Genoese archdiocese in 1806 and 1818 respectively.

7 Guerello, "L'erezione del vescovato di Noli."

Up to the Twelfth Century: Inheritance and Plans

Due to the extreme paucity of sources, it is impossible to determine to what extent elements of Genoa's expansionistic plans of the twelfth century were inherited from the past. During the period of Carolingian rule in Italy, a network of broad districts (*comitati*, or counties) centered mainly around urban centres was established. The only royal official attested from this time, however—a Count Ademar—is mentioned in the *Annales regni Francorum* for 806 not because he was active in the territory, but because he was involved in a naval expedition against the Saracens.⁸ Moreover, the expression used in reference to Ademar's relationship with Genoa seems to suggest that the urban center was somewhat detached from the surrounding territory.⁹ This is partially proven by the fact that in contrast with many other Italian cities, the word *contado*—which derives from the Carolingian *comitatus*—was not commonly used in Genoese sources to define the suburban territory, even during the period in which this term began to be typically employed, i.e., from the twelfth century onward.¹⁰

For a long time the notion of what constituted "Genoese territory" remained empirical; this quite limited territory included areas close to the city where the urban landowners, both lay and ecclesiastical, held their property. This can be observed on two important occasions: in 958, when the Genoese turned to the weak kings Berengar and Adalbert in order to have their customs confirmed, and a century later in 1056, when the person they turned to for similar political issues was Alberto, a member of the Obertenghi, a dynasty which from the mid-tenth century had also held political offices in western Liguria and its hinterland.¹¹ It has to be noted that the Ligurian Levante is only rarely referred to as a march (*marca*) in written documents, and these references appear long after the march was allegedly established. Moreover, Genoa cannot be labeled an "episcopal city"; this would typically be surrounded by a *districtus* extending a few miles beyond the city walls (a *districtus* which in north-central Italy, as a rule, was rarely recognized by imperial authorities) and a rich patrimony located in the diocesan territory. Among other places, properties belonging to the urban Church are attested before 980 in San Remo, in the westernmost

8 Cf. chap. 3, pp. 81–2.

9 *Comes civitatis Genuae*; cited in Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 19 and 39.

10 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 18–27, and "Definizione e organizzazione."

11 On these agreements, see chaps. 3, pp. 74–5, and 4, pp. 95–8; also Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 21–4.

part of Liguria.¹² It is nonetheless true that around 1139, when guard rosters for the main urban fortifications were drawn up, or when levies meant to replace guard duties were established, some of those required to perform these duties resided in an unnamed area that included the city's suburban territory and the adjacent Bisagno and Polcevera valleys, thus confirming the existence of an area that was more integrated with and dependent on the city. In its embryonic form at the end of the eleventh century, therefore, the Genoese commune had reached a certain stability and was able to record such commitments methodically, yet the situation described reflects a well-established framework of territorial relationships.

The oldest documents in the registers of urban sources, both ecclesiastical and secular (that is, the book registering the privileges of the Genoese church and the first *Liber iurium*¹³) can be taken as paradigmatic for the early regional ambitions of this largest Ligurian city, since they illustrate a trend which would continue for centuries. In 1101 and 1104 Baldwin I, head of one of the newly-established crusading kingdoms in the Middle East, endowed the Genoese church with substantial goods and concessions. The church was representing *de facto* the newly-established commune, whose consuls swore fealty to the king, but the privileges and fiscal immunities mentioned in the documents could be extended to the inhabitants of Savona and Noli (1101), and later to those of Albenga (1104). Very early on, therefore, Genoa represented these three neighboring centers while at the same time regulating their access to external trade—with the clear intention of exerting control especially over their commercial activities, which were the city's main concern. In 1109, Genoa obtained from Count Bertrand of Saint-Gilles (a borough on the Languedoc coast) tax exemptions and protection when travelling across comital lands. But what should be stressed is that these privileges extended to all inhabitants of the coast from Nice to Portovenere: namely, the territory over which Genoa sought to assert its control.¹⁴

The region as a whole thus constituted a sort of “extended harbor,” which Genoa aimed to control in every possible way. In later periods, when the

12 *LPE*, doc. 1, pp. 22–3. On the history of Genoa, including the city's relationship with the Ligurian coastal areas up to the thirteenth century, the most up-to-date synthesis (to which I shall not refer again) is Polonio, *Da provincia a signora del mare*; this is also useful for its bibliographical references. The main sources mentioned in this chapter such as the *Libri iurium* (*LI*) and *Annals* (*AGC*) are freely available online; for the early medieval phase see chap. 3 in this volume.

13 These sources are discussed in chap. 1, pp. 34–40.

14 *LPE*, doc. 25, p. 42.

sources allow for more precise analysis, they show that even small settlements were dedicated to seafaring activities (although shipbuilding was mostly restricted to centers with neighboring beaches, which were generally found in the western Riviera): this made coastal navigation more convenient than travel by land. And in fact Genoa itself showed only selective interest in the Ligurian hinterland, chiefly regarding control of the mountain passes and the areas beyond the Apennines.

The Twelfth Century: Beginnings of the Medieval Region

It will now be appropriate to offer a schematic overview of the main territorial objectives of medieval Genoa, which was simultaneously active in different areas of the Mediterranean on both commercial and military levels, before considering a selection of themes which will demonstrate the main features of the interactions between center and periphery. This selective approach reflects the discontinuity of prior studies of Ligurian territorial organization. Research on the matter has been scant, with relatively comprehensive coverage of the formative twelfth century but much less so of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when conflicts between aristocratic factions in the city further weakened Genoa's hold on its Ligurian territory. Yet the underlying dynamics are not in doubt, characterized as they are by monotonously repetitive tensions and conflicts, not excluding temporary setbacks in the relationship between center and subjected areas.

One fruitful (if laborious) research path, for example, could be the systematic identification of the officials placed by the "capital city" in subject areas: cities, communities, castles and districts of varying sizes. Establishing first and foremost when these officers acting on behalf of Genoa were placed, the continuity (or lack thereof) of these offices, as well as their circulation and the recruitment methods of officers during the period of the *podestà*, vicars, captains, and castellans would enable a more cogent analysis of the relationship between center and periphery. Furthermore, such an analysis would establish in what ways particular individuals—and the social networks in which they took part—affected local dynamics and fostered institutions. From this perspective, it is worth noting a single factor which further complicated matters, namely, that from the end of the fourteenth century (1396), Genoa was periodically subject to foreign rule (first the Holy Roman Empire, then the kingdom of France, and finally the Milanese Visconti and Sforza), with regular restorations of self-rule: this will have influenced the selection of at least the highest officials.

After the aforementioned documents of 1101 and 1104 established Genoa as representative of certain other Ligurian cities (Savona, Noli, and Albenga), one of the initial concerns of the Genoese commune was to determine which parts of the coast would eventually fall under the city's rule. As regards the easternmost part of Liguria, the commune conducted a military operation in Portovenere in 1113. After this episode, the commune further intervened to stabilize a stronghold against the seigneurial powers in the area and to check the territorial expansion of Pisa, the Tuscan city that had for a long time struggled with Genoa for control of the Tyrrhenian sea, and on more than one occasion had attacked Portovenere. But the 1113 intervention has to be taken as a sign that Genoa wanted to oppose all the seigneurial powers in the territory (devoid of urban centers) between the city and its new base at Portovenere.

With regard to the western parts of Liguria: in 1130, almost simultaneously with the previous event, the commune built a tower in San Remo, which was intended more to affirm Genoa's ambitions than to defend its bishop's property. On this occasion, the inhabitants of a number of nearby communities—above all, the same counts of Ventimiglia who were first subdued in 1146—were forced to pledge their fealty to the city.¹⁵ Information about these successes comes mainly from the city's annals, however, so we must be conscious of its oversimplifications (regarding the time-frame necessary for the construction of the fortifications, for example) and propagandistic aims (evident from its silences on Genoa's failures and reversals of policy, for example). The same caveat must also be kept in mind when considering Genoese "foreign" policy: this source, which was written by different hands up to the end of the thirteenth century, has as its most basic purpose to express the official stance of the commune.

In 1162 Genoa obtained authorization from the Empire to intervene along the whole coastline: Frederick Barbarossa granted the region in fief to the Genoese commune, albeit only in military matters. When referring to the territory over which the commune advanced its claims, the Emperor used the term which the Genoese themselves had proposed: a *districtus* (already mentioned in a document dated 1157) that included the entire coastal arc from Portovenere to the port of Monaco, just to the west of Ventimiglia (*a Corvo usque Monachum*). This expression is repeated almost compulsively in the subsequent sources to refer to the far ends of the region, an area corresponding more or less to modern Liguria. The term *districtus* may thus refer to more or less the entire region, denoting the limits of the areas where the Genoese

15 For Ventimiglia's subjection, see the acute perspective offered recently by Dartmann, *Politische Interaktion*, 220–50.

commune could exercise sovereignty and jurisdiction on varying levels; as a program, however, it was never fully implemented.¹⁶

Although the previous scholarship has stressed the peculiarity of the Genoese commune's behavior during this phase, the clear territorial plans devised by the city can be compared to those pursued by other cities, beginning with Milan, which during this period made various attempts—some of them successful—to subdue neighboring urban communes. Moreover, in 1162, Pope Alexander III, upon Genoa's request, removed the churches of Portovenere from the control of the church of Luni, at that time in decline, and incorporated them into the Genoese archdiocese, which already included the monastery of San Venerio on the islet of Tino, off the coast of Portovenere. This was an attempt to make areas of civil jurisdiction and those of ecclesiastical jurisdiction coincide, even though the border between the dioceses of Genoa and Luni tended to remain fixed in the intermediate coastal locality of Framura.

Before considering how the Genoese commune tried to affirm its position along the two Rivas (west and east), we must stress that, from the 1120s onward, the commune had begun to show interest in the Oltregiogo (the area behind the city, beyond the Apennine ridge towards the north), and especially in the high valleys of the Orba, Bormida, and Scrivia, which gave access to routes important for communication with the area that is nowadays part of Piedmont. These included a number of castles and villages, for control of which the recently-established commune clashed first with the marquesses of Gavi (who had been intermittently engaged in overseeing these routes on Genoa's behalf), and later with the marquesses of Parodi. During the 1160s the developments in this latter conflict led to Frederick Barbarossa's intervention in support of the city: it is also worth noting that the Genoese managed to subdue the marquesses of Parodi partly by obliging them to reside in Genoa for a few months each year. However, these relationships with seigneurial powers, which were periodically challenged and re-established by mutual agreement, are different from the alliances which Genoa tried strenuously to establish with other urban powers further north, who were equally interested in controlling the passes. Those alliances were not aimed at territorial expansion, but rather at guaranteeing the safety of the main roads. Control of the Genoese outposts oriented towards the lowlands was never completely stable: here we may limit ourselves to this general observation, which is also true for the later centuries of the Middle Ages, when the area was included in a special vicariate (a territory governed by a high official sent by the city). These were villages and castles that were often used against Genoa by its internal rivals—the members

16 Savelli, "Scrivere lo statuto," 65–80.

of the main aristocratic lineages—as for example during the conflict-ridden and still-obscure fourteenth century.

Following the acquisition of Portovenere and its castle, where a castellan was already in place in 1141, Genoa acted on various levels to consolidate its control of the Ligurian Levante. A good number of these initiatives have left substantial physical remains, which can serve as a useful starting point. By 1174 the commune had built or acquired seven newly-established castles or villages; the greatest concentration of these efforts took place between 1145 and 1167, on a section of the coast between 30 and 45 kilometers east of Genoa. With these interventions the Genoese anticipated similar choices made later by other Italian communes and obtained good results. The commune could thus curb and partially contain the vigorous seigneurial presences in the area: first, the lords of Vezzano in the territory around Portovenere; later, the nearby lords of Lagneto and Passano; and above all, closest to the city, the counts of Lavagna and the Malaspina marquesses—that is, the descendants of the Obertenghi marquesses.

All of these were gradually pushed inland, and almost forced to specialize in the control of the mountain passes through the Apennines towards Emilia—a territory into which, unlike the Oltregiogo, Genoa never showed any interest in expanding. Instead, an early agreement with the city of Piacenza was aimed at the coordinated development of commercial activities.¹⁷ In particular, by encouraging the new coastal boroughs of Sestri (1145) and above all Chiavari (1167), the Genoese commune hindered the growth of the village of Lavagna located between those two, which was one of the strongholds of the ambitious local lords: the counts of Lavagna, who were also known as the Fieschi. The scattered nature of these communal interventions also hindered the growth of a full-fledged city in the Ligurian Levante, with long-lasting repercussions still felt to this day.¹⁸ Whether it is always possible to recognize a “Genoese” building and architectural style in these new settlements—be they castles or villages—is an intriguing question that remains open and debatable.¹⁹

The commune also developed its policy of containing seigneurial powers along diplomatic and military fronts. Such choices were implemented at the same time as those of other Italian communes. Once again, it is the Genoese annals which inform us, however intermittently, of these actions; especially regarding methods of conflict resolution, the information provided by the annals

17 Racine, “Relazioni.”

18 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 41–53.

19 The problem has been discussed in recent studies, but no definite conclusions have been reached; see Cagnana, Gardini, and Vignola, “Castelli e territorio.”

must be integrated with the documents collected (presumably selectively) in the city's *Libri iurium*. The first two interventions recorded, dated 1128, reveal an intense conflict that would remain heated for a long time. In February of that year, the Genoese consuls first established that the counts of Lavagna were not required to pay any taxes beyond the usual ones, but this decision was revoked a mere two months later following the counts' violation of earlier agreements.

It is the 1130s, however, that were decisive for a systematic confrontation with the lords of the Ligurian Levante. During these years the commune resorted to all the political and practical tools available to it: agreements with the lords of Passano through which Genoa acquired rights over two villages while the Passano obtained a fief (1132); complex negotiations with the marquess Opizzo Malaspina, who had strengthened his position in an area where he could control the roads, and agreed to help the Genoese commune in its struggle against the counts of Lavagna (1132 and 1140); the swearing of the *compagna*—that is, the agreement uniting the citizens of Genoa, from which the commune originated—in 1138 by the counts of Lavagna, the lords of Lagneto (allies and relatives of the Passano), the lords of Nasci, and those of Cogorno (both within the sphere of influence of the counts of Lavagna); a decree requiring the lords of Lavagna to reside in the city for at least two months per year (1138); and the donation of plots of land in Genoa to family members of both the Passano and the counts of Lavagna, to encourage their settlement in the city (1139). Yet the energy and ingenuity demonstrated by these policies did not prevent the counts of Lavagna and their allies from rebelling against Genoa eight times during the twelfth century.

On the other Riviera Genoa faced a more diverse group of political actors due to the presence of three smaller cities: Ventimiglia, Albenga, and Savona. It would be anachronistic to imagine that these three cities, whose communal institutions developed over a longer period of time than Genoa's, managed to control their surrounding territory by restraining the seigneurial presence, who were composed mainly of the descendants of the marquesses who from the tenth century had ruled the two territorial districts joining Piedmont and Liguria. It is precisely because of the seigneurial presence in these cities and the areas surrounding them that Genoa was forced to experiment to develop a complex strategy for territorial control.

Genoa was interested in Ventimiglia not only because it was the westernmost urban center in the region, but also because it could be used as a base for further expansion towards Provence, a goal which the commune managed to implement only irregularly, along narrow, disconnected stretches of the coast; Nice remained an objective which was won and lost at intervals. It is impossible

to determine whether the many-branched family of the counts of Ventimiglia actually descended from the officials of the Ottonian period, but if they did we could easily understand why the family was so deeply rooted in this area of Liguria.²⁰ In any case, the local lords' entrenched presence made their subjection a laborious task which required the transfer of residence to Genoa (of Count Oberto) and marriages to Genoese citizens (1146) followed by the subjugation of another branch of the family (that of Count Guido Guerra in 1157). Despite the remarkably large expanses of patrimonial land held by these lords, the Genoese were really interested only in the coastal areas, the harbor (which possessed little potential), and the individual settlements that would enable control of the trade route passing through the Col di Tenda towards what is now southern Piedmont. This can be surmised from the fact that during the 1170s Genoa firmly backed, with clear anti-comital intent, the forms of self-government adopted by the inhabitants of Ventimiglia—whose commercial activities were certainly supported by Genoa, but who nonetheless rebelled against Genoa when the opportunity arose, such as during Frederick Barbarossa's stay in Italy in 1158. In this area there are no attestations of Genoese officials, such as those mentioned for Portovenere. In 1192, however, the Genoese commune forced the lords of Ventimiglia to sign an accord, after enfeebling assets of little strategic value to one of the counts.

Among the smaller cities of Liguria, Albenga most resembled an "episcopal city" during the first half of the twelfth century, although it later sought emancipation from the authority of the bishop, who was supported by a largely extra-urban clientele. This may have been why Albenga developed a more harmonious relationship with Genoa even though the territory in question was never clearly defined. In 1165, for example, Albenga endured a harsh attack by the Pisan forces during a war which Genoa and Pisa fought over Sardinia. The allied city's fealty to Genoa was ratified by an agreement, dated 1179 and renewed twenty years later, which favored its economic development.

Genoa's rivalry with nearby Savona did not encompass merely competition between the two ports, but also over the same Apennine passes leading into southern Piedmont. Genoa's desire to dominate its rival is visible in the earliest restrictions that it imposed in 1153 and reiterated in 1168 and 1181, the nature of which explain the enduring hostility of the Savonese. The inhabitants of Savona were required to provide military service at Genoa's discretion, observe a number of consular decrees that restricted where they could trade, and pay a share of expenses for diplomatic missions. But the real severity of the Genoese demands can be gauged from two other burdensome obligations in particular:

20 Embriaco, *Vescovi e signori*, 79–101.

the requirement that Savonese ships bound for distant harbors must call at Genoa—entailing the payment of taxes on both inbound and outbound cargoes—as well as the obligation to carry mainly Genoese merchants on such ships. It is worth noting that these duties were ultimately the price that the Savonese elites paid to Genoa for its assistance against the local marquesses during the formative period of the Savonese commune. While the strength of these marquesses lay in their numerous possessions in the surrounding territory, they were eventually forced to loosen their grip on the urban center and swear oaths (1148–50, and later renewed) to the Genoese commune itself.

In various ways, the Genoese also developed relationships with smaller localities, thereby blocking the other cities in the Ligurian Ponente from coastal expansion. This policy was clear in its objectives yet adaptable to contingencies; since it cannot be followed case by case, I will merely offer a few examples. In 1137 the Genoese commune severely limited the autonomy of Ferrara, lady of Albisola. Ferrara was a member of a many-branched marquesal family which at the time was using the name “of Savona” to evoke one of the family’s earliest centers of power while concentrating its interests elsewhere, in an area that now lies in Piedmont. At any rate, Genoa’s attempt to limit Ferrara’s autonomy in Albisola, which is located halfway between the two rival cities, did not yield definitive results and did not prevent the village from falling under Savonese influence during the decades that followed. But around the mid-twelfth century Genoa was also active on the other side of Savona, assisting Noli in its struggle against the marquess Enrico of Savona, and thus enabling the town’s emancipation and development into a commune. During the 1180s, other attempts at autonomy by communities further to the west, such as Lingueglietta and Porto Maurizio—although expressed in different ways—were immediately crushed by Genoa, which increasingly envisioned itself as a regional “capital”.

Overall, the twelfth century saw the first delineation of the different areas of authority of this chief city of Liguria, as well as the gradual development of a new definition of its *districtus* (more or less coinciding with the Genoese diocese), which came to mean the territory over which the city exercised civil jurisdiction.²¹ Having laid out Genoa’s various territorial and jurisdictional ambitions we must (however approximately) establish the salient characteristics of regional development. It is important to stress that even in the later Middle Ages, the notion of a “border”—in whatever context it is used—did not necessarily imply a clear-cut and linear division, even though such boundaries

21 Savelli, “Scrivere lo statuto,” 65–80.

continued to be influenced by natural elements such as valleys, rivers, and mountain ridges.

Towards a Regional System: A Network of Relationships between Center and Periphery

From the thirteenth century onward, certain recurring dynamics that had been foreshadowed in earlier periods become easily recognizable. First of all, widespread challenges to Genoese authority were already reappearing in the early years of the thirteenth century. In the Ponente, for example, the subjugation of Savona reached another level—not definitive, but significant—in 1251 when Genoa imposed a protectorate on the city. The Savonese were given the freedom to choose a *podestà*, but he had to be Genoese. The imposition of a Genoese official was a solution to which the city resorted repeatedly when dealing with localities and communities of different sizes.

Two factors, however, ultimately proved to be obstacles rather than advantages for the Genoese project of regional stabilization, given that the Genoese were more interested in the coast and in those localities that were potential competitors from a commercial point of view: on the one hand, the fact that the Levante remained a territory devoid of cities, and secondly, the failure of the cities in the Ponente to construct solid *contadi*, partly as a result of Genoese policies. This relatively synthetic explanation can be nuanced by turning our attention to subsequent developments. Limiting ourselves to the case of Albenga, we might observe that the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw a proliferation of its enclaves in nearby territorial domains that fell under non-urban jurisdictions: in this way, this small city in the Ponente was able to resist the pressure exerted by all of these domains to control the lands and inhabitants of what remained a small *contado*.²² Even during the last centuries of the Middle Ages, Genoa was unable to control large swathes of territory and reconstitute the Ligurian mosaic, consisting as it did of disorderly fragments of varying size. To simplify in the extreme, this situation was different from the better-studied cases of Florence and Venice, where the scholarship has mainly emphasized the interventions these two urban centers made (or failed to make) in the system of *contadi* surrounding their subject cities, rather than on the continued existence of numerous areas which escaped urban jurisdiction entirely.

22 Braccia, *Diritto della città*, 23–4.

We must now shift our attention to another aspect of Genoese policy, which, especially in the Ponente, often supported the aspirations of the Riviera's inhabitants toward political emancipation. This policy was also a means by which the city could bring order to its relationships in circumstances complicated by the presence of different political actors.²³ An agreement drawn up in Genoa in 1202 recognizes an important network of pre-existing community relationships, and attests to the Genoese commune's ability to use these to its own advantage, at least temporarily. Swearing themselves to the *podestà* of Genoa are six delegates of an association (*iura*) representing the inhabitants of places that are first and foremost referred to as valleys. The valleys mentioned in the agreement are Arroscia, Andora, Oneglia, Pietralata, Rezzo, and Nasino, which are represented by both consuls and specially-appointed envoys. Each locality is named by reference either to its main settlement (whether on the coast or in the mountains), or to the river which passed through it. Individual villages and fortifications—twenty-one of them—are listed only secondarily. It is therefore important to recognize some level of organizational capacity not only in the official agreement but also in the administrative framework of these valley settlements and their inhabitants: they knew how to manage the internal relations of broad territorial areas—for example, regarding the exchange and transfer of goods, the collective management of animal husbandry, the logging of forests, and the exploitation of uncultivated lands.

These matters take on even greater significance when we consider that this territory is Albenga's hinterland and its "natural" area of westward expansion. The conditions sworn by the delegates, which were renewable every five years, demonstrate the Genoese commune's intention to curb any development by that smaller city, so that Albenga would have to forgo the ambition of exerting hegemony or any kind of control over such an organized and complex association. On the one hand, the localities bound by the agreement were obliged to participate in military ventures upon the request of the Genoese magistrates; on the other hand, they received permission to export goods from Genoa, the right of judicial appeal to Genoese institutions, and the establishment of two annual markets in Andora and Oneglia, two coastal towns which thereby acquired central positions within a very extensive territory. These markets were to be overseen by Genoese officials, and Genoese weights and measures had to be used in trading; the political and economic influence of Liguria's main city was therefore made explicit. A generic clause was aimed at safeguarding the rights of the local lords, since the Genoese did not intend to dismantle the previous system entirely. But the new conditions did not prevent a *rassa* (war)

23 On the sequence of the events being described, Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 68 and 89.

between this alliance and other coastal communes in 1204. The most damage was done in Porto Maurizio, a borough a few kilometers west of Oneglia, whose inhabitants must have reacted badly to the establishment of these new hierarchies in the territory.

The peace agreement of 1204, which also mentions the inhabitants of areas in the Piedmontese Alps, was orchestrated by the Genoese, who proclaimed as rebels the participants in the agreement of 1202. In re-establishing order, this agreement reaffirmed that both sides were to continue to pay taxes and provide services to all their lords as before. Among these was the marquess Boniface of Clavesana, who in 1205 was held responsible—although his precise liability remains ambiguous—for damages caused by those of his men who had adhered to the valley alliance. This ambiguity lets us surmise on the one hand that the marquess was unable to control his discontinuous territories between Piedmont and Liguria; on the other hand, it also seems to imply that different interests could converge over certain territories, at least temporarily.

Two different results of the events just described, evident at two separate moments, are worth mentioning in order to better understand this *rassa*, which was first resolved—perhaps through the use of force—by means of the agreements with Genoa, but later crumbled due to rivalries among both external and internal parties, thus giving Genoa another opportunity to act as mediator. These consequences help to explain why Genoa failed to construct a regional territory characterized by (anachronistic) political uniformity.

The first result was the reaction of local lords: in the course of the thirteenth century the local lords of marquesal descent (the Clavesana and del Carretto) patronized about ten new villages that reinforced existing patterns of settlement in the Ponente. They acted independently from other powers, especially from Genoa, in fostering the creation of villages in the territory around Albenga and Savona—both along the coast and in mountainous areas convenient to trade routes. They improved pre-existing settlement structures (*pievi*, bridges, and towers) and encouraged the implementation of grouped settlements, which potentially allowed better control of the inhabitants from the seigneurial perspective.²⁴ During the fourteenth century, Albenga also encouraged the creation of a few other settlements.²⁵

The second outcome developed over a longer period of time—it was still visible in the early modern period—and affected the Levante as well as the Ponente, albeit to a lesser extent. This was the ever-increasing desire on the part of communities, lords, and even a city such as Savona for control over

24 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 55–87.

25 Costa Restagno, “Villenuove.”

specific inland territories, mostly in mountainous areas. These areas specialized in the production of timber (especially oak and beech) that was crucial to Liguria's numerous shipbuilding yards. This exchange between coastal and mountainous areas—which did not preclude long-standing contacts with villages beyond the mountain ridges—reduced the marginality of these inland areas, especially from an economic perspective. It also secured the availability of supplies without requiring direct Genoese control, since members of Genoese aristocratic and mercantile families often acted as intermediaries between the city and the hinterland, and since Genoa's interests were more pragmatically focused on ensuring that matters worked out efficiently than on monopolizing the trade in such materials.²⁶

A second sphere of interest, observable from at least the beginning of the thirteenth century, is useful to show how Genoa governed its territory, acting realistically among programmatic intentions, mandates, and the recognition of pre-existing conditions. With a few exceptions, recent generations of scholars have shown little interest in these dynamic aspects of territorial organization and the evolution of the administrative framework during the late Middle Ages.²⁷ As previously stated, from the twelfth century onward we can identify a *districtus* that was more directly dependent on the city. Moreover, the boundaries of this *districtus* became well-defined over time, a fact that is especially evident in the absence of statutes produced autonomously by small and medium-sized communes towards the Levante up to Chiavari, which implies that Genoese laws were in force there.²⁸

But three other territorial districts coinciding only in part with the narrower *districtus* also begin to appear in the sources. These are the three suburban *podesterie*, each encompassing a few villages, known as the podesterie of Val Polcevera and Val Bisagno (both valleys adjacent to the city), along with the podesteria of Voltri, which adjoined the latter and was located in the immediate Ponente.²⁹ From at least the early years of the thirteenth century, the city itself began to construct the first two territories as unitary bodies, and Genoese

26 Basso, "Navi, uomini e cantieri."

27 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 321–42 (to which I shall not refer again) has tackled the problem of administrative structure methodically and most attentively, especially with regard to the fourteenth century; also, its bibliography contains references to the available primary and secondary sources.

28 Savelli, "Scrivere lo statuto," 81ff.

29 On this *podesteria*: Ruzzin, *Voltri*.

notaries who were active in these areas started to refer to them as valleys.³⁰ Previously such areas had been imagined as more fractional territories, with the *pievi* being the natural reference points of the parish districts. Additionally, none of the potential actors of the suburban territory built fortifications from which they could exercise seigneurial prerogatives. The suburban territory was therefore kept almost devoid of private fortifications, while the few fortifications that did exist were granted no authority to manage the territory surrounding them. Sources dating to the last decades of the twelfth century refer to a *podestà* in Voltri, but the scope of his responsibilities is still unclear. It was either the *podestà* of the valley, or else a judge based in the city acting upon his mandate, who could make decisions concerning the districts. This happened in the Val Polcevera, where the first *podestà* (1210–12) was, not accidentally, a member of the powerful Genoese della Volta family.³¹ As the *podesterie* only rarely appear in other sources, only a methodical analysis of the extremely rich Genoese notarial archives will enable us to evaluate the other responsibilities of these institutions and the influence exercised on or through them by urban individuals and families.

This system which united multiple settlements of different sizes into districts was later extended to all of Liguria, and remains an issue in need of further study. The *podesteria* that brought together Varazze, Celle, and Albisola was studied at the beginning of the twentieth century, revealing that the district began functioning in the 1340s. Its origin was attributed to the desire of these coastal communities—already expressed in the thirteenth century—to expel the local lords of marquesal descent, who were tied to Savona. They managed to do it by disbursing copious sums of money, but above all with the more or less overt assistance of Genoa. It should also be noted that members of powerful Genoese families—the Guerci and the Malocelli, who were related by marriage to the descendants of the local marquesses, and later the Doria—exerted their influence on local affairs during a long intermediary phase.³² However, despite the goal of constructing a juridically uniform territory, Savonese enclaves remained within the *podesteria* along with a plethora of small and complicated exceptions which were eliminated only in modern times—a situation which perhaps also pertained in one way or another throughout the rest of Liguria.³³

30 Buongiorno, "Qualche ipotesi." Studies focusing on borders have given almost excessive attention to such issues.

31 Guglielmotti, "Linguaggi del territorio."

32 Russo, *Sulle origini*.

33 Braccia, "Territorio e giurisdizioni."

Following the establishment of individual strongholds, for which San Remo and Portovenere can be viewed as prototypes, Genoa established a system of *podesterie*, districts that it regularly readjusted in order to affirm its position in the region. The situation in the Levante helps explain the circumstances in which these efforts were deployed. Here, at the expense of the Malaspina marquesses, the counts of Lavagna (who were, as previously stated, part of a large kin group whose members in Genoa adopted the name of Fieschi) extended their dominion in the Val di Taro and over the Val di Vara—where at the end of the thirteenth century they tried to consolidate their position by founding the town of Varese. Meanwhile, the Malaspina continued their policy of aggression toward Genoese settlements in the area. In 1278, for example, perhaps with the aid of the Fieschi, the Malaspina neutralized the Genoese defense system and briefly occupied Chiavari. The Genoese counter-offensive ignored the Apennines and, playing off the internal rivalries of the many-branched marquesal family, sought successfully to gain a new castle in Arcola in order to control the lower Valle del Magra, at the extreme end of the region. Thanks to these violent pressures, Genoa created districts of different sizes: towards the end of the thirteenth century the men from three suburban *podesterie* and a further ten *podesterie* located in the Levante were expected to provide armed service in cases of military mobilization. At first the latter *podesterie* were organized in a single vicariate, but this was divided into two just before the middle of the fourteenth century (although earlier, another four districts are attested between Genoa and the Bracco Pass: Recco, Rapallo-Cicagna, Chiavari-Lavagna, and Sestri-Moneglia-Frascati-Framura, each of which was governed by a *podestà*).

This arrangement also became capillary in the Ponente only around the mid-fourteenth century, under the newly-established dogeship of Simone Boccanegra. The system evolved out of sporadic references to *podesterie* during the thirteenth century: in parallel with developments in the Levante, it appears that two vicariates were also established here from 1351 onward.

A certain stability in these political experiments can be observed in the balance forecasts of the “Genoese state” for 1349–50, which provided for monetary disbursements for the upkeep of the following scattered fortifications (which did not necessarily coincide with the main settlements in this system of districts): two in Savona and one each in Noli, Albenga, Cervo, Penna, Pareto (probably in Valbrevenna, behind Genoa), and Triora (in the far western Ponente); also, two castles in Portovenere and one in Amelia (suggesting further expansion toward the east). These lists allow us to understand a few aspects of the Genoese government, but they also have to be approached with caution since they are likely to reflect more incidental problems. Two years

later, a new forecast also mentions Ventimiglia, which for a few years had subjected itself to Robert of Anjou, lord of Provence and the southernmost part of Piedmont as well as king of Naples. In addition to the fortifications mentioned above, the regular budget for 1413 also lists other places located along both Rivas, among which Pietra, Giustenice, and Pieve di Teco are all situated in the Ponente and Chiavari in the Levante.³⁴ Naturally, beneath these military efforts lies an attempt to stabilize the wider *districtus* where Genoese control was periodically challenged with violence—as for example in the Ponente, where the del Carretto marquesses fiercely opposed Genoese control, especially around 1340.

It is also important to note that Genoa's internal political history had long had direct repercussions on Ligurian territory. Scholars have interpreted these repercussions as a consequence of the factionalism present in the region, of the political strife between Guelfs and Ghibellines or nobles and *popolari* (commoners), or else linked to the *colori*, that is, political parties that were alternately allied with or hostile to each other. The scholarship has especially stressed this aspect of the situation rather than other complex issues which could affect Genoa's relationship with the *districtus*. Such scholarship has established a sort of inherent and long-lasting "otherness" for the case of Genoa as compared to other Italian cities.

We must also stress that movement from the center to the periphery did not merely create tensions on institutional, administrative, and military levels, those aspects often used to characterize a process of "state construction". As early as the second half of the thirteenth century, a number of powerful Genoese families based in the city made investments (if we can include a number of unscrupulous occupations among such "investments") especially in the Ponente.³⁵ For example, the presence of the Doria is attested in Loano, Dolceacqua (figs. 66–7), and especially Oneglia, a town which later divided the Ponente into two vicariates; this is in addition to the same family's investments in Sardinia. The Grimaldi invested further to the west, in Monaco, while the Fieschi focused on the upper Scrivia valley while maintaining their solid roots in the Levante near Lavagna, where branches of the same family continued to use the topographic qualification *de Lavagna* in their names. This is an area in which the achievements of nineteenth-century historians and more recent generations of scholars should be recomposed within a more dynamic framework, to demonstrate precisely and comparatively the strategies,

34 Buongiorno, *Bilancio di un stato*, 487–98.

35 On the parallels between Genoese families' holdings on urban, regional, and international scales, see chaps. 9, pp. 232–8; 17, pp. 479–80; , and 18, pp. 501–10.

gambles, failures, and effective local influence of the members of these complex kin groups, who were often distantly related and did not always act cohesively. In reconstructing such a framework a few trends ought to be taken into account: we should not discount considerations of economics and patronage, nor should we oversimplify these dynamics by describing them in almost tautologous fashion as Genoese lords and fiefs, thereby detaching them from Genoese politics on a broader scale. Instead, we should acknowledge that it was sometimes convenient for Genoa to recognize such *de facto* seigneurial powers insofar as they already expressed Genoese territorial policy.

Moreover, some of these dynamics could easily start in the more or less distant periphery and affect the center. Two brief examples will clarify this point: in 1339 a popular revolt occurred in Savona. (Apart from Genoa, only Savona and Albenga experienced a popular movement in the political sense.) This revolt rapidly extended to Genoa, ultimately leading to the removal of the last two *capitani del popolo* (captains of the people) and the establishment of a dogeship. Likewise, in 1399, the *Bianchi* movement (a devotional group driven by the need to seek repentance for their sins, but whose members were capable of making political decisions), which had begun in Piedmont, made a significant stopover in the Val Polcevera where the movement gained new vigor and reorganized before moving on to Genoa.³⁶

Even during the late Middle Ages the presence of multiple actors continued to stymie a move towards a form of regional organization coordinated and hierarchized along political and institutional lines. To better convey this idea, we might mention first that the conflict between Genoa and Savona became increasingly serious because Savona became a pawn in the political game between Milan and the kingdom of France with respect to its relationship with Genoa. But we might also cite two other cases, one from each end of the region, where the main actors were Genoese subjects who were unwilling to comply with the city's policies. At the far end of the Levante, we may observe bold and incisive attempts to control trade routes. Following a complex political and diplomatic negotiation with the Visconti of Milan, to whom Genoa submitted in 1421, the Genoese Tommaso di Campofregoso (whose ascent to social prominence was recent compared to the ancient noble families of Genoa) received the territory of Sarzana and other areas in the vicinity of the Lunigiana as compensation for relinquishing the dogeship; his relatives governed these areas as lords until 1484, much like other magnates at the outskirts of the dominant Italian powers. Likewise, from 1476 the Casa di San Giorgio—the influential Genoese banking institution that operated as a state within

36 Recently Giraudo, "Devozione dei Bianchi," 8–9.

a state—acquired a number of villages and their pertinent territories in the Lunigiana (the first was Amelia, which the Doria had briefly controlled). The result of financial operations that spanned decades, this acquisition eventually led to the end of the seignorial rule of the Campofregoso in this area.³⁷ Meanwhile, in the Ponente, the habitual presence of the Genoese Grimaldi family, a many-branched kin group with deep roots in the town of Monaco, provided an element of continuity to Ventimiglia, the westernmost of the small Ligurian cities, the political history of which was otherwise far from linear. In fact, members of this family frequently occupied official roles—as for example Lamberto Grimaldi, who was governor of the city for five years from 1464–9, by appointment of the Milanese government of the Sforza in Liguria.³⁸

In conclusion: even during the late Middle Ages, as we have seen, the territorial organization of Liguria continued to be characterized by a certain political and organizational fluidity, with only limited developments compared to the achievements of the formative twelfth century. This situation is also visible in the ever-changing regional system, which cannot be classified within a single model or category. It was the result of lack of coordination by the center's main actors: a communal government which was so often weak and divided that it eventually delegated part of its powers to a banking institution; an archiepiscopal church whose jurisdiction was solely ecclesiastical and mainly concentrated in the Levante; powerful and complex aristocratic families (of ancient or recent origin) who often maintained seats both in Genoa and in the towns and lands of both Rivas, and who alternately supported or vehemently opposed the policies of the commune; and finally, middle and lower social groups who remained indifferent to regional upheavals because they were able to find profitable alternatives in commerce and maritime activities beyond Liguria.³⁹

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37 Petti Balbi, "Un episodio di affermazione."

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Early Medieval Genoa

Ross Balzaretti

This chapter deals with the most neglected period in Genoa's history, its early medieval past (*ca.* 450–*ca.* 1050 AD).¹ The main reason for this neglect is the erratic survival of evidence, which is poor even when compared with what can be termed the “normal” gaps encountered in the documentation of this famously “dark” period in European history. Given the almost complete absence of narrative sources (such as the numerous annals which survive north of the Alps), it is not possible to write a continuous narrative of “what happened” in Genoa between the end of Roman Empire and the emergence of the Genoese Republic six centuries later. There have, of course, been many attempts to do so, all of them worthwhile in their different ways, but some suffering from a desire to tell a joined-up story. In his influential book on medieval Genoa, Steven A. Epstein characterized the early medieval settlement as “practically nothing,” a rather harsh judgment which took no account of archaeology but understandable in relation to its later medieval history.² Romeo Pavoni, in a substantial narrative of medieval Ligurian development, often relied on later evidence to tell his early medieval story, as documented in his copious apparatus.³ Short sections on the early medieval city have often appeared in local histories which deal with Genoa over the long term.⁴ More recently, Paola Guglielmotti's excellent work on the territorial organization of medieval Liguria has been joined by an essential handbook on the medieval city which is a sure guide to its archives and to printed sources.⁵ Currently, the most exciting research is archaeological and results for this period have been well set out in a very well-illustrated recent volume which investigates Genoa “from its origins

1 Balzaretti, *Dark Age Liguria (DAL)*, 81–109, uses more archaeological data than the current chapter which expands on the ninth and tenth centuries in more detail using written documentation. I am most grateful to the editor and especially to Prof. Paola Guglielmotti for their helpful comments on earlier drafts.

2 G&G, 12–28, critiqued along the same lines by Guglielmotti, “Review,” 926–30.

3 Pavoni, *Liguria medievale*, 55–245.

4 Cevini/Poleggi, *Genova*, 23–30, and Assereto/Doria, *Storia*, 25–8.

5 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 15–39, and *GMCI*, 3–13, 29–32, 50–57.

to the year 1000.”⁶ Most of these works regard the early medieval phase as a low point in Genoa’s history.

This “dark-age phase” does not appear quite so anomalous when a very long-term view is taken. Genoa has certainly existed for a long time, with dateable occupation archaeologically-documented as far back as *ca.* 2300 BC, and for much of this time local populations have survived through a combination of the cultivation of subsistence crops, notably chestnuts, and the judicious importation of products from across the Mediterranean. The Roman period—several centuries either side of the year 200 AD—was the real anomaly, for when Genoa became part of a huge empire it became possible for Genoese people to survive largely on imports which must have distorted the nature of the local economy. It is unsurprising that Roman-period writers characterized Genoa in one dimension only: its relationship with the Mediterranean Sea.⁷ Writing early in the first century AD, Strabo famously dubbed it “the *emporium* of the Ligures.”⁸ It is the argument of this chapter that early medieval Genoese history was different because Genoese residents developed economic, social, political and cultural relationships with the mountainous interior in ways never attempted in the Roman period (but certainly evident from the twelfth century).⁹

Yet the Roman legacy was strong in terms of the urban plan. Archaeology has shown that the settlement Strabo described was small and concentrated in the area now known as the *porto antico* (old port), the narrow streets immediately around the cathedral of San Lorenzo leading down to the waterfront.¹⁰ It was of the typical quadrilateral plan favored by Roman town-dwellers, but in this instance the town appears to have had few of the monumental buildings which dominated places like Milan, Naples and Rome itself. Genoa did not become one of the great centers of the Roman world, an anomaly which still requires explanation.¹¹ The flat settled Roman center is still overlooked by a hill known as Castello which rises 50 meters above sea level and was occupied

6 Melli, *Genova dalle origini*, 199–253.

7 A simplistic view as implied by Horden/Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*, 117, who argue for the complexity of “dispersed hinterlands” such as that of Genoa, an example they cite.

8 Strabo, *Geography* 4.6.1 and 5.1.3.

9 Smith, *Western Mediterranean*, 59–60.

10 DAL, 82–5. Recent archaeological assessment of the flourishing port by Dell’Amico/Gervasini, “Merci e mercati,” in Melli, *Genova dalle origini*, 191–6. See also the discussion of early urban development in chap. 9, pp. 220–21.

11 Most probably it was not attractive for development as it was close to mountains (often problematic for the Roman state) and did not really lead to anywhere else important to Roman transport networks.

both before the Romans arrived and after they left in the middle of the seventh century. At the turn of the first millennium it became the first obvious site of power within the town when it was fortified by the bishops of that time who had a huge, solid and presumably impregnable palace constructed, where they lived a lifestyle of aristocratic luxury which included copious consumption of roast pork of the choicest cuts, served from fine imported tableware.¹² This period also produced the bulk of the surviving charters, records of property transfer which show the Genoese church under the leadership of a couple of long-lived bishops expanding its reach into the Ligurian countryside, with the consequence that the city developed an interior hinterland arguably for the first time. For this reason it is these charters—fewer than a hundred—that are the focus here: they document a moment of real change, the significance of which only becomes clear when a very long-term perspective is taken.¹³

18 July 958

One of the most famous documents in Genoese history dates from this period, namely the diploma granted to “the Genoese” by King Berengar II and his son Adalbert on 18 July 958 (issued from the royal capital of Pavia).¹⁴ Its provisions were simple. Having been petitioned by Hebo (“our dear faithful follower”),¹⁵ Berengar and Adalbert confirmed to those inhabitants of Genoa who were their *fideles* (faithful) the properties both within and outside the city which they held by any title, whether acquired by custom or by inheritance.¹⁶ The kings prevented public officials of any rank from entering the houses of these men and staying overnight for free (*mansionaticum*).¹⁷ In most respects this royal grant is typical of the period of fluid politics across the north of Italy in the 950s when Berengar and Adalbert were effectively “sub-kings” under the “protection” of the northerner Otto I of Germany, with the impor-

12 Miller, *Bishop's Palace*, 65–7.

13 DAL, 86–97, surveys sixth- to eighth-century Genoa.

14 Text: CDG, 1.3–4; Rovere, “Tradizione”; and LI 1.1, 4–6. Discussion: Epstein, G&G, 16–17; Cevini/Poleggi, *Genova*, 25–6. The grant is also discussed in chap. 4, pp. 95–6.

15 *Nostri dilecti fidelis*. Hebo seems to me likely to be the same person as viscount “Ydo” recorded in an original charter of 952: the spelling of “Hebo” is unreliable given that it is transmitted in a copy of this text made in the twelfth century.

16 [Omnibus] nostris fidelibus [et habitatoribus in] civitate Ianuensi cunctas res et proprietates illorum seu] libellarias et precarias et om[nia] que secundum consuetudinem [illorum tenent aliquot titulo vel modulo] scriptionis adquisierunt; LI 1.1, 5.

17 Pavoni, “L'evoluzione cittadina,” 244–5.

tant caveat that, in words of Chris Wickham, “the citizens of Genoa were the first recipients of ... the first charter to a citizen body which survives.”¹⁸ This, when allied to the notable absence of any reference to the Genoese bishop (who at that time was Theodulf), has suggested to many historians that Genoa is an important example of a new-found political ambition on the part of the citizen body to protect the customs of their town.¹⁹ The point is seemingly strengthened because Bishop Theodulf was an outsider who could not command local support,²⁰ as indicated by an earlier charter dated 951–2 in which Theodulf had stated that he was “newly in office and ignorant of the customs of the place.”²¹ While it is absolutely plausible that Theodulf did not have local support in 951–2, as he had only recently become bishop, it seems a little odd that he still did not have such support in 958, years later, although he could easily have faced similar treatment to that meted out by the local clergy at Verona to the northern incoming bishop Rather (from Liège) who was expelled from the see on three occasions between 931 and 974.²²

We can turn to another outsider—who conceivably might have known Theodulf, if he was an Ottonian appointment in Genoa as is sometimes supposed—to find a convincing explanation for what was really going on. Liudprand of Cremona, a deacon from Pavia who would be appointed bishop of Cremona by Otto I in 962, claimed in his polemical pamphlet about Otto I (*Historia Ottonis*) that the marquess Otbert I, a member of the Obertenghi clan whose power base was in eastern Liguria in the so-called “March of Genoa,”²³ had petitioned Otto I around the year 960 with regard to Berengar and Adalbert’s “savagery.”²⁴ In 958 the kings had specifically mentioned that “no marquess” (*nullus marchio*) could infringe the rights of the Genoese, which seems to explain Otbert’s gripe, as the provision was presumably directed at him personally. Liudprand reported a further complaint to Otto made by Archbishop Walpert of Milan, who as the metropolitan bishop was Theodulf’s

18 Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy*, 190. The charter does not actually term them “citizens,” though, only inhabitants.

19 Reynolds, *Kingdoms*, 165.

20 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 22, and Filangieri, “Canonica,” 3–4.

21 *CSS*, 1: *nullam qualitatem neque consuetudinem loci cognoscentes*.

22 Rather, *Works*, 5–11.

23 Hlawitschka, *Oberitalien*, 244–5, and the more extensive study of Nobili, “Formarsi.”

24 Liudprand of Cremona, ‘Concerning King Otto’, ch. 1, ed. Squatriti, 220. For Liudprand’s views of King Hugh of Italy, a contemporary and enemy of Berengar’s, see Balzaretto, “Narratives.”

immediate superior. He claimed that Berengar's behavior, in illegally appointing Manasses of Arles to the Milanese see, had "snatched away what ought to belong to him and his people." These three magnates—Otbert, Walpert, and Theodulf—all had reason to be suspicious of Berengar and may even have been allied together against the influence of Berengar and Adalbert within this part of northwestern Italy. Otbert had other interests in the region as evidenced by his appearance in a late tenth-century inventory of the major monastic community at Bobbio (in the northwestern Apennines) as a benefactor of that community: "the benefice which Marquess Otbert gave to the abbey."²⁵ Bobbio was not firmly under the control of any bishop, least of all the bishop of Genoa, at this time, in part because of a tradition of direct dependence on the papacy since the seventh century.²⁶ Closer to home, Theodulf had also built up a local power base in the 950s, as demonstrated by a series of local charters through which he acquired land for his church both inside the city itself but also outside in the Lavagna, Rapallo and Polcevera valleys at sites on routes of obvious strategic and economic significance, including Albaro,²⁷ Bavari,²⁸ Molassana,²⁹ Pontedecimo,³⁰ and elsewhere.³¹ These charters deserve much greater attention than has been common in the historiography of Genoese development, both for the light they shed on city politics but also for the unique insights they provide into the local economy in the tenth century. Politics and economy were of course fundamentally interconnected.

The Charter Evidence

"Charters" are one of the most common forms of evidence in this period and the term encompasses many different types of document by which rights over property were transferred between two (or more) parties. At Genoa the earliest authentic survival dates to 916, a very late date indeed for a "first" charter when compared with survivals from other parts of Italy where similar charters date from the early 700s in many places, notably Lucca, Piacenza and Milan

25 *Beneficia que Aubert marchio de abbatia dedit*, ed. Castagnetti, *Inventari altomedievali*.

26 Wood, "Jonas," 99–120. The bishops of Piacenza and Tortona subsequently had unrequited designs upon it.

27 CSS 1, docs. 1 and 3.

28 RC, 144–5, 161–3.

29 RC, 209–10, 222–3, 233–4, 236–8, 257–8, 271–2.

30 RC, 236–8.

31 Benente, "Incastellamento"; Guglielmotti, "Linguaggi."

(often surviving as original single sheets and not in later medieval cartularies, copied versions of such originals). It is not clear why this should be, although it is possible that attacks on Genoa by “Arabs” in 934–935 may have caused the destruction of such documents as we shall see. It could equally well be that the early tenth century was the moment when Genoa “took off” as an urban society which was sufficiently complex to require the written (as opposed to oral) documentation of important transactions, and that it had not been such a society before then.³²

Between 916 and the year 1000 a maximum of 58 authentic charters has survived, some with later interpolations.³³ That number compares with, for example, around 150 for Bergamo in the same period, which was probably a much smaller and certainly a more isolated settlement.³⁴ The number of Genoese charters increases significantly after 990, a pattern which (given their content) seems to reflect real change in society rather than simply chance survival, and that rate of increase is maintained in the first few decades of the eleventh century. Most charters involved extended family groups (parents, siblings, cousins) transacting with the Genoese church in a small range of places mostly in the Bisagno and Polcevera valleys, relatively close to Genoa itself. What was happening in places not documented in charters—the great majority—is therefore hard to judge.³⁵ Around 14% of the tenth-century documents are original single sheets which is important as these can be used to check the authenticity of the texts (the majority) copied into cartularies in the twelfth century: this percentage is perhaps slightly less than is common elsewhere in Italy (but that is hard to prove in the absence of published statistics for all Italian charter collections).

The earliest charter of 916 stands alone as it is a whole generation apart from the next charter dated 946. It is a rent contract (*libellus*) from the time of Bishop Ratpert which concerns property in Bargagli in the upper Bisagno

32 *DAL*, 90–102, deals with the period between *ca.* 550 and *ca.* 900 when surviving written documentation is sparse: some letters of Gregory the Great, a few inscribed stones, stray references in Carolingian annals, and some local hagiographical works of uncertain date.

33 Calleri, “Usi cronologici.” Appendix 1 (57–63) lists all the tenth-century Genoese charters and describes their transmission histories. The edition of Tommaso Belgrano (*RC*) is significantly improved upon by Basili/Pozza, *Monastero di San Siro*, and especially *CSS* and *CDSS*, vol. 1.

34 Cortese, *Pergamene*, docs. 59–212.

35 *DAL*, 53–9, deals with tenth-century rural settlement patterns as documented in these charters.

valley immediately north of Genoa.³⁶ The properties, already owned by the Genoese bishopric, were “in the territory of Bargagli” at five named sites: Taciolo*, Lavaniasco*, Trasio* (Traso), Coloreto* and Monticello*.³⁷ An extended family group of cousins—men, women and male children—agreed to increase the productivity of the land (“to improve and cultivate it, and subject it to no neglect,” a standard formula, i.e. a generic phrase) and make an annual return of 2 *denarii* to the church, while the church retained specific lordly rights over the higher slopes (*scatico et alpatico*) presumably used to pasture sheep.³⁸ This deal was a renewal of an existing arrangement with their parents, which reveals that this charter did not in fact mark the beginning of something new but a continuation of something already established, probably verbally. Unfortunately, nothing else is known about Bishop Ratpert and his activities.

The next phase in the history of these charters covers the years 946–81, the pontificate of Bishop Theodulf who from the year 945 governed the Genoese church for more than thirty-five years. He is known as the bishop who, in the wake of “Saracen sackings” of the city, embarked on a “reform” program which can be compared with similar contemporaneous developments elsewhere in Europe.³⁹ The traditional narrative is that Theodulf revitalized religious life in Genoa, especially at the extra-mural communities of San Siro and Santo Stefano, in activities documented in sequences of charters which begin respectively in 951 (nine charters for San Siro between 951–1000) and 965 (fifteen for Santo Stefano between 965–1000). While this may be true it remains hard to estimate the extent of his reforming activity given what we do not know about what came before him. Unfortunately it has proved impossible to identify Theodulf in other charters where he might be expected to have appeared (perhaps as an intercessor?), including the diplomas of successive kings of Italy or documents associated with the monastery of Bobbio. His name and his reforming interests suggest that he may have originated from north of the Alps, although he was not part of the recorded networks of Hugh (d. 948), who was the current king of Italy in 945 when he took charge of the see. Hugh had

36 *RC*, 159–60. The commune of Bargagli currently has a population of around 3000 people and is still agricultural in focus. It was on an ancient transhumance route in previous centuries. For these and other places mentioned in this chapter, see maps 4 and 5.

37 *In finibus Bargalina*. Placenames marked with an asterisk (here and elsewhere in this chapter) remain unidentified.

38 *Meliorare et colere et nullum neglectum ibidem facere*. *Scatico et alpatico* is a relatively uncommon phrase in this period which may indicate that the properties recorded in these charters were commonly on the lower and not the higher slopes. It is also likely that the higher, grazed slopes were managed collectively by local farmers.

39 Polonio, “Universalismo,” 82; see also the discussion in chap. 13, pp. 370–73.

a reputation for appointing unsuitable bishops to north Italian sees (for example the Lotharingian Rather appointed as bishop of Verona in 931 and the Provençal Manasses to Milan in 948), and does not appear to have had much sway in Liguria, so we may reasonably presume that Theodulf may have had other supporters who facilitated his way to his Genoese job.

Twenty-six local charters allow the activities of Bishop Theodulf and his church to be traced year by year in some detail to the end of his episcopate in 981, and these reveal developing relationships with the Ottonian royal family, with local aristocrats and other owners, as well the foundation of a monastery at Santo Stefano in 965 and the creation of a community of clergy at the cathedral who may have lived in common.⁴⁰ The first document, drafted in Genoa by Silvester, a Genoese priest, is another *libellus* contract dated May 946 concerning property in *fontana paupera* ('the poor fountain' or 'fountain of the poor') which the tenants were to "improve, not worsen." The required production was wheat, rye, barley and spelt, as well as sheep, goats and chickens. There is, perhaps significantly as we shall see, no mention of trees in this document. A priest named Silvester features in another charter dated 23 September 951 (or 22 September 952) which deals with property in Genoa itself, and this is most likely the same person who drafted the charter of 946. This survives as an original single sheet, and is perhaps the most interesting of the early Genoese charters, especially as it was issued while the Saxon Otto I was attempting to take control of Italy for the first time. It reports that Theodulf revoked an existing grant of a vineyard to Silvester, who was his "faithful adherent" (*adiuratus fidelis*) and re-allocated its tithes to the church of San Siro.⁴¹ The vineyard was bounded by other vines held by viscount Ydo (otherwise unrecorded in this spelling) which extended to Castello, the first written reference to this Genoese landmark hill, by a "public road" and ditch, and a road going to Castelletto (outside the city walls).⁴² The rest of the boundary clause fills in the wider topography of the mid-tenth-century city: "outside the wall of Genoa in the ditch of Caderiva and the River Bisagno to the ditch of Saint Michael *Caput Arenae*," a large swath of land.⁴³ In the charter, Theodulf used the phrase "see of San Siro," and signed it himself along with a group of his clergy: Vuitbaldo, "archpriest of the Holy Genoese Church"; two deacons both called Johannes,

40 Analyzed in detail by Guglielmotti, "Patrimoni femminili." See also the discussions of this point in chap. 7, pp. 168–9, and chap. 13, p. 346.

41 CSS, doc. 1, 1–2; Calleri, "Usi cronologici," 57; Macchiavello, "Cattedrale di Genova." This charter was curiously overlooked by Epstein in *G&G*.

42 Poleggi, *Santa Maria di Castello*, 17.

43 Filangieri, "Canonica," 3–5.

“chief deacons of the Holy Genoese Church” (*de cardine*); and the priest John “of the Holy Genoese church.” The income from the re-allocated property was given to the *clerici* (clergy) as a group—these four and presumably others—and clearly Theodulf was building up San Siro as the leading Genoese church, with a permanent staff of senior clergy to run it, manage its properties and minister to parishioners. San Siro eventually became a Benedictine monastery in 1007 under Theodulf’s successor John II,⁴⁴ having been the recipient of several grants from locals in the vicinity of the Bisagno and other eastern valleys,⁴⁵ and possibly from the widowed Empress Adelaide in 999.⁴⁶

The charters of Santo Stefano record properties owned near Genoa in Albaro and a few other places which are now part of its eastern suburbs. These documents which straddle the year 1000 are notable for contracts with locals to develop new cultivable lands for chestnuts and other fruiting trees.⁴⁷ At Albaro the properties were around the small church of San Nazaro, a favourite Milanese saint. Other Genoese churches also developed portfolios of land in eastern Liguria, notably San Giorgio in the Lavagna valley.⁴⁸ Here, in a typical charter of exchange (*commutatio*) between the church and a certain Eldeprand, San Giorgio’s land was described as “under the control of the Genoese church, sited within a wall of the city of Genoa near the church of San Giorgio” and Eldeprand’s land was “sited in the Lavagna valley, at Noali, Casa Vetere*, and Campo Sculdasio*,” and was considerably larger. Although the charter was drafted in Genoa, the bishop’s representative Liuzo went to Lavagna and made the agreement in front of local witnesses and some from the neighboring Rapallo valley. Clergy representing the bishop are recorded elsewhere; for example in 969 Archdeacon Andrea represented Theodulf at the Milanese synod, but this did not occur that often, suggesting quite a localized sphere of action for many of them.⁴⁹

44 CSS, doc. 9, 14–17; Frondoni, “Bisanzio e l’Occidente,” 17.

45 CSS, docs. 3, 5–14.

46 CSS, doc. 4, 6–8. The original is lost, and the entire charter is very fragmentary and possibly suspect. There are hints in other documents of Ottonian connections with monastic communities at San Tommaso (Genoa) and San Fruttuoso di Capodimonte near Camogli. But these charters are also highly suspect. I am grateful to my colleague Roberta Cimino for discussion of Adelaide’s charters.

47 CDSS 1, docs. 2–28. Squatriti, *Landscape*, has much useful comparative information about chestnut cultivation in the Po valley and in Campania. Cf. Balzaretti, “Chestnuts in Charters.”

48 CSS, 3–4; Filangieri, “Canonica,” 6.

49 Polonio, “Universalismo,” 83.

Genoa and the World

If we shift our focus from the charters and their intense documentation of the local details of Genoese society and its developing relationships with the immediate region—what we might term its hinterland—to the documentation, such as it is, which hints at the relationships of “the Genoese” with other parts of the world, what do we find? In this period the overriding impression—at least in my opinion—is that Genoa was marginal to most of the important developments which were happening elsewhere, notably north of the Alps. “Carolingian Genoa” can hardly be said to have existed when the minuscule surviving evidence for it is compared with the large numbers of documents preserved for other parts of that vast empire. Liguria was barely noticed by Carolingian-period authors, including the Italian Paul the Deacon, who in his lengthy *History of the Lombards* (written *ca.* 790) mentioned Genoa or Liguria five times only.⁵⁰ It was he who reported (in book 2.25) that Archbishop Honoratus of Milan fled to Genoa to escape the invading Lombards in the year 569, but typically there is no other evidence in support of his statement.

Just after Paul died (most probably in 799), Liguria if not Genoa briefly appeared on the world stage in a way which hints that the town may have been a “gateway” site of some importance to the Carolingian ruler himself, the famed Charlemagne.⁵¹ The arrival of the elephant Abul Abaz—a diplomatic gift from the Muslim ruler Harun al-Rashid to Charlemagne—at Portovenere on the eastern Ligurian coast and subsequent journey northwards overland was an event important enough to be described at length by the *Royal Frankish Annals*, spread over the entries for 801 and 802.⁵² These annals reported that in Easter 801 Charlemagne, while at Pavia on his way back north from his coronation as Roman emperor in Rome, was told about the gift of the elephant from a Persian legate. By October Isaac “the Jew”—on his way back from the Persian court where he had been sent by Charlemagne four years earlier—had landed with Abul Abaz in Liguria. The animal spent the winter in Vercelli (no doubt in icy conditions), and by 20 July 802 arrived with Isaac and other gifts in Aachen at the imperial palace. Sadly, the creature did not survive. Genoa itself appeared in the *Royal Frankish Annals* for 806 when it was reported that Ademar, “count of Genoa,” assisted Charlemagne’s son Pepin king of Italy in his anti-Arab expedition to Corsica: “Pepin sent a fleet from Italy to Corsica

⁵⁰ *Historia* 2.15, 2.16, 2.25, 3.23, 6.24; ed. Capo, 94–7, 104–7, 152–5 and 326–9.

⁵¹ Airdi, *Storia*, 282–8.

⁵² Hodges, “Charlemagne’s Elephant”; Brubaker, “Elephant”; Dutton, *Charlemagne’s Mustache*, 59–62.

against the Moors who were devastating the island. Although the Moors did not wait for its arrival but made off, one of our men, Ademar, count of the city of Genoa (*comes civitatis Genuae*), rashly engaged with them and was killed.”⁵³ Although this is the only reference to a Carolingian “count of Genoa,” the reference to Ademar as “one of ours” suggests that Frankish identity in this specific context and at this point in time was constructed in part by being anti-Arab. Another Carolingian text reported that “Pepin’s army liberated the island of Corsica, which was oppressed by the Moors.”⁵⁴ These Carolingian stories of “Charlemagne’s elephant” (a “status animal,” in Dutton’s phrase) and of King Pepin’s anti-Arab war in Corsica—widely diffused via contemporary annals—can be seen as evidence of the local impact of an increasingly demanding and effective Carolingian state.⁵⁵ More commonly, it has been argued that the early ninth-century Genoese were still part of a Mediterranean-wide network of exchange.⁵⁶ Such a network is looking increasingly plausible given recent archaeological work in the Po delta, notably at Comacchio.⁵⁷ The evidence for Genoa as a flourishing port in the eighth and ninth centuries is not yet so convincing; but it may well be there to be discovered as research continues.⁵⁸

The interaction of the large monastic community of Saint Columbanus at Bobbio and the town of Genoa further supports the view that local and international exchange were linked at this time, and that this had potential ramifications for relationships of various sorts with northern Europe. For example, as the ninth century progressed, the monks of Bobbio effectively brought Genoa to the notice of the Carolingian royal family. In a recent environmental history of medieval Europe, “agricultural intensification” was highlighted as one of the defining characteristics of the Carolingian period when seen in a long-term perspective.⁵⁹ The famous inventories made at Bobbio (and some other Italian monastic communities, notably Santa Giulia in Brescia and Sant’Ambrogio in Milan) throughout the ninth century evidence this.⁶⁰ When it resulted in surplus (presumably the intention), intensified production meant that surplus could be exchanged, at suitable sites of which Genoa was clearly one. A monastic inventory made at Bobbio in 862 noted that:

53 King, *Charlemagne*, 97. Cf. discussion in chap. 2, p. 52.

54 *Historia Langobardorum Codex Gothanus* 11.

55 Verhulst, *Economy*.

56 McCormick, *Origins*, 515–22, using evidence from the Lucca charters.

57 Hodges, “Aistulf”; Gelichi, “Alla fine” and “L’archeologia.”

58 Carobene et al., “Aspetti geoarcheologici” (results summarized in *DAL*, 83–4).

59 Hoffmann, *Environmental History*, 83.

60 Laurent, “Organisation.”

In Genoa, the church in honor of Saint Peter [San Pietro della Porta, now San Pietro in Banchi⁶¹], can be collected annually 10 *modia* of chestnuts, 8 *amphorae* of wine in a good year, 40 *librae* of oil; there are purchased annually for the use of the brothers 100 strings of figs, 200 citrons, 4 *modia* of salt, 2 *congia* of garum, 100 *librae* of pitch; it has 6 tenants, who work the vines and bring the aforementioned renders to the monastery.⁶²

An earlier inventory made between 833 and 835 (for Charlemagne's cousin Wala, exiled to Bobbio as its abbot during the rebellion against Louis the Pious) did not mention this property and neither did a confirmation of property received from the Emperor Louis II in 860.⁶³ This means that the acquisition of the Genoese church of San Pietro by the monks of Bobbio can be dated *between* 860 and 862, although how that happened is not clear. The church seems to have functioned as a sort of clearing house for produce, which could only have been obtained by sea in the case of the citrons (or other citrus fruit presumably from Arab suppliers) and probably of the fish sauce.⁶⁴ The chestnuts, wine and olive oil—a common trio of Ligurian storable staples which are richly evidenced in the later medieval period here—were most probably locally produced to be exchanged for the more “exotic” fare.⁶⁵ While chestnuts could have been produced close to Bobbio as well as near to Genoa, the wine would certainly have been of better quality near the coast, and the oil could only have been produced there as the rest of Bobbio's land was at too high an altitude and therefore too cold for successful olive production.

The development by Bobbio of a centralized Genoese operation between 860 and 862 was probably facilitated by existing monastic ownership of land in eastern Liguria, acquired perhaps within a competitive context given that the Genoese bishops may already have been interested in the area. On 5 June 774 Charlemagne himself had granted to Bobbio “Alpe Adra,” a sizeable tract which was inland from coastal Moneglia in the vicinity of Castiglione Chiavarese in the Petronio valley.⁶⁶ Subsequently confirmed in many other royal diplomas,

61 On 30 July 972 Otto I confirmed Genoese property to Bobbio and a late copy of the text gives *ecclesiam Sancti Petri que est sita in civitate Ianue*: Cipolla/Buzzi, *Bobbio*, 1.324, doc. 95.

62 My translation. See McCormick, *Origins*, 634, and Squatriti, *Landscape*, 185.

63 Wanner, *Ludovici*, doc. 31.

64 McCormick, *Origins*, 633–6.

65 Of course the oil, a product essential for both church lighting and liturgy, may well have ended up at Bobbio itself: Fouracre, “Eternal Light.”

66 Collins, *Charlemagne*, 61–2.

this was described in the 862 inventory alongside other upland properties in the Aveto and Taro valleys. Genoa could have provided an outlet on the Mediterranean for production from these and other estates, and it is certainly significant that the nearby church of San Pietro della Porta, over which Bobbio had rights, was sited almost in the water right down in the port area, where the remains of several early medieval storehouses have been found.⁶⁷ All the properties listed in the inventory of 862, including Genoa (*Ienua*), were confirmed by Louis II on 2 February 865 at the request of his powerful wife Angilberga,⁶⁸ and in similar documents dated 882 and *ca.* 1000, the latter devoted to *Terra que in Maritima esse videntur* ('Land which is in the coastal area'). Bobbio was not the only religious body from outside Genoa to have property in the city's port area: the hugely wealthy and immensely high status royal nunnery of Santa Giulia at Brescia—patronized by Angilberga among other royal women—also had Genoese land ("5 free men, who return 240 *librae* of cheese"), according to an early tenth-century inventory.⁶⁹

At this time the activities of the bishops of Genoa are hardly documented at all. It is unclear, for example, how they might have responded to the activities of these powerful external forces operating within their diocese. There are hints from early in the ninth century that the bishopric may have been in need of reform (at least in Carolingian eyes), evidenced by a capitulary which Lothar I issued from Olona (now Corteolona, near Pavia) in May 825 specifically to rejuvenate the north Italian church. The king required that Genoese clergy should study with the Irishman Dungal in Pavia, while clergy from Albenga, Vado and Ventimiglia in western Liguria should instead go to Turin, somewhat closer.⁷⁰ This division suggests that the Genoese see may have been rather detached from the heartland of the north Italian Carolingian kingdom which was significantly further east, centered on Pavia, Milan and Verona. However, from the 860s particular bishops appear to have engaged more obviously with the Carolingian church. In October 864 Bishop Peter went to the Council of Milan chaired by his metropolitan Archbishop Tado. His successor Sabatinus, who had a long pontificate between 865 and 889, helped in 876 at the Council of Pavia to confirm the election of Charles the Bald as emperor. In 877 Sabatinus attended a synod in Ravenna called by Pope John VIII, and 878 the pope himself was in Genoa on his way to Provence, the first pope certainly to have visited the

67 Gardini/Murialdo, "Liguria," 164.

68 Wanner, *Ludovici*, doc. 42; Cimino, "Patrimonio."

69 Castagnetti, *Inventari*, 92, and Polonio, "Monachesimo femminile."

70 Azzara/Moro, *Capitolari*, 126–7.

city.⁷¹ John wrote charmingly to Archbishop Ansper of Milan about his rough sea crossing while resting in Genoa. In the 860s and 870s, therefore, Genoese bishops began to be part of the northern Carolingian world in ways that their predecessors seem not to have been.⁷²

Although ninth-century Genoa was to a degree part of the Carolingian world, it was not this which local sources reported. They were rather more interested in “Saracens,” a fact which gives rise to the possibility that there might be an early medieval aspect to one of the most clichéd themes in Genoese history, namely the militant Christian republic fighting the Moors on crusade.⁷³ Ademar, “count of Genoa,” as already seen, was killed during the Carolingian attempt in 806 to “liberate” Corsica. Although Carolingian sources presented this as successful, Arab attacks nevertheless soon began along the Ligurian coast, suggesting that it had not been a particularly effective intervention. A narrative (in the genre known as a “translation”) of the removal of the bones of Saint Romulus from what is now San Remo to Genoa itself—although difficult to date precisely—nevertheless provides further evidence.⁷⁴ The author of the surviving version (most probably written in the late tenth century), related how “in modern times” Bishop Sabatinus (d. 889) had moved the saint’s bones because of devastating Saracen attacks from *Fraxinetum* (La Garde-Freinet, near Saint-Tropez in Provence). The precious relics were taken by boat by the clergy and the “people” (*populus*) to Genoa and reburied under the altar of an unspecified church (probably San Siro) with an inscription composed by Bishop Sabatinus placed above, which has not survived. There is an interesting sense of a collective Genoese identity embedded in this text which, even if a hagiographical *topos*, when read alongside the reference to “the inhabitants” in the famous charter granted to the Genoese by kings Berengar and Adalbert in July 958 (discussed above), suggests a stronger sense of community at this period than is evidenced in any earlier documentation.

This community feeling is expressed too in the “Book of Privileges” of the Genoese church, in a short section with the title *De sancto Romolo* (and dated 979/980) which narrates more of Romulus’s translation.⁷⁵ This, in the opinion of the unknown author, gave authenticity to the gift of land near Taggia and San Remo by which Bishop Theodulf restored those properties to the canons of San Lorenzo after the Arab attacks. The text was drawn up precisely to record

71 Polonio, “Universalismo,” 5.

72 *GMCI*, 52–3.

73 Cf. the excellent discussion of Airaldi, *Guerrieri*.

74 Picard, *Souvenir*, 602; *GMCI*, 53 and 106.

75 *LPE*, doc. 8; on this source see the discussion in chap. 1, pp. 34–5.

this symbolically important land transfer. A brief passage stated that Bishop Sabatinus moved Romulus's bones to San Lorenzo and placed them under the altar. This location was crucial to the clergy of San Lorenzo, as it meant that their intra-mural church was securely established as the cathedral rather than the extra-mural San Siro. The bones of Saint Syrus of Genoa were translated at some point to this latter church, although recently Nicholas Everett has argued that the Bobbio manuscript which deals with this is in fact about Saint Syrus of Pavia.⁷⁶ By the tenth century, Syrus appears to have been regarded as the city's patron in preference to Lawrence who had been favored earlier, before himself being supplanted later by the familiar Saint George.

If translations of saints' relics as well as military campaigns developed some sense of common identity for some Genoese, it would seem that a crisis was reached in 934–5 when Genoa was itself "sacked" by Fatimid Arabs. Although there is no strictly contemporary account (a recurrent problem with much Genoese documentation in this period), the trend of events is clear from both Christian and Islamic authors. Writing with a helpfully transparent western Christian agenda, Liudprand of Cremona reports that "... the Phoenicians arrived there (Genoa) with many ships, and they entered the city while the citizens were unaware, slaughtering all except women and children. Then, putting all the treasures of the city and the churches of God in their ships, they returned to Africa."⁷⁷ Liudprand juxtaposes this information with his negative account of the Arabs ("Saracens" to him) who had settled at *Fraxinetum*; coupled with his reference to a Genoese "fountain overflowing with blood," this is an unsubtle but characteristic literary device to suggest God's disapproval of the Genoese and their corrupt church. Arabs from *Fraxinetum* under the leadership of Muhammad al-Qaim Bi-Amrillah (second Fatimid caliph there) were probably responsible for this attack, even though Liudprand terms them here "Phoenicians."⁷⁸

As is to be expected, Arab sources tell a very different story, which some historians have used to claim that this 934–5 attack evidences Genoese economic "vitality" as a place worth attacking.⁷⁹ The so-called *Chronicle of Cambridge* written in Sicily (a tenth- or eleventh-century Arabic text) relates that Abu al-Qasim sent a fleet to Genoa and captured it. A much later Arab account of Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn (d. 1468) is fuller, which Kedar (ignoring its very late provenance)

76 Everett, "Earliest Recension." Picard (*Souvenir*, 601) gives "before mid-ninth century" for this *Vita S. Syri*. It is preserved in a Bobbio manuscript: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Vat. Lat. 5771.

77 *Antapodosis* 4.5, my translation (Squatriti, *Works*, 142).

78 Miller, *Bishop's Palace*, 66.

79 Kedar, "Nuova fonte," 606.

used to construct an argument that the sorts of Genoese cloth referenced within it revealed a sophisticated tenth-century economy. He linked this late source to Liudprand's "treasures," especially the linen and raw silk mentioned, to argue that trading with Arabs was well-established in the tenth century. It remains an unproven case, although not entirely implausible.

Genoa around the Year 1000

By the year 1000 the Genoese bishops had developed much greater influence and power to the east of Genoa than to the west. This was largely due to early tenth-century Arab attacks in the western Riviera, but also because of the ancient local identity of its own sees, notably Albenga. For whatever reason, Genoese bishops failed to acquire comital powers as other north Italian bishops did at this time, and such relative institutional weakness has suggested to many historians that Genoese society was ruled quite independently of kings or bishops by a sea-faring aristocracy which came to dominate much of the Mediterranean by the end of the eleventh century. While this is certainly a possible interpretation of the rather thin evidence, it has been suggested in this chapter that kings and bishops were in fact rather more locally powerful than has often been believed. The charters support this view, as they foreground the activities of the bishop and his clergy, centered on the several churches which definitely existed in Genoa by the close of the first millennium, including the cathedral of San Lorenzo, San Siro, Santo Stefano, San Giorgio and San Pietro. The activities of these institutions were all supported by production from lands owned chiefly to the east and northeast of the town, most in adjacent valleys but some far away around Lavagna (but nevertheless accessible by boat).⁸⁰ The properties owned were generally in the lower parts of these valleys on the lower level slopes. The few narrative sources which have survived suggest that the tenth century was a time of intense competition for political control over and within Genoa between various groups of outsiders, especially Ottonian and Arab rulers which probably caused as a side effect the development of greater local political consciousness. Even with the bones of Saint Syrus securely in their cathedral, Bishop Theodulf and his successor John (984–1019) seem to have felt insecure; whether it was threats from Arabs, Ottonians or the local aristocracy, they may have had good reason for building their massive fortified tower-house on the hill of Castello, the earliest Italian example of a bishop's house which has been archaeologically studied. At the same time—

80 Such links between city and countryside are a leitmotif of this volume; cf. e.g. chaps. 12, p. 347, and 18, pp. 496–520.

and presumably by a process which helped to bring in the resources needed to build such a palace—they also extended the power of their church outside of Genoa by means of alliances based around the management of property, as evidenced by the charters. Because of these patterns of documentation, the local historiography has emphasized the importance of the bishop and development of a network of urban churches staffed by a growing number of clergy *de cardine* (“cardinals”), who were closely linked to the cathedral and possibly even lived in common there. But prominent though Bishops Theodulf and John were, almost nothing is known about their origins or beliefs. Their dealings with men and women in the countryside reveal them to have been embedded in local politics and reliant on the interior for much of their wealth as the Genoese had so often been in the past.

All the key themes outlined in this chapter are of course very relevant to later medieval Genoese history (much better documented), which illustrates the expansion of Genoese rule across its Ligurian territory and well beyond. Many more charters have been preserved after 1000 than before and these have allowed detailed investigation of Genoese expansion westwards, which was not really a feature of Genoese history in early medieval times. The survival for the first time of a rich local historical narrative written by Caffaro (*ca.* 1080–*ca.* 1164) gives historians much more scope to study the details of Genoese politics.⁸¹ However, the interaction between bishops, clergy and secular society which is attested before the year 1000 is still highly relevant after it, even though Genoese horizons undoubtedly expanded Mediterranean-wide in later centuries. Early medieval Genoa can therefore be seen both as a distinctive society in its own right—as this chapter has argued—but perhaps also as the precursor of a later expansionist state.

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PART 2

Politics and Society



The Commune

Luca Filangieri

On 18 July 958 in Pavia, in the midst of skirmishes with the German king Otto I, the two kings of Italy, Berengar and Adalbert, received Ebo, their “faithful” layman who had come to appeal to them on behalf of a group of “the inhabitants of Genoa.”¹ The record of that occasion, written by the chancellor of the two kings and based on a draft presented by the Genoese, is the oldest and most complex witness to a historiographical problem complicated by the existence of very few documents, namely: what was the city of Genoa—understood as a political and social entity—a century and a half before the first attestations of an autonomous government?

The Pavian diploma does not offer any concrete information regarding Genoa’s presumed primacy in the development of communal institutions. The text allows us to infer only that by the middle of the tenth century Genoa was inhabited by a group of landowners who were able to shape their own political identity. Although their number is unknown, it is clear that Berengar and Adalbert recognized them as *fideles* (loyal men) and thereby supported their political position—which is all the more relevant when we consider that the document lacks any reference to Theodulf, bishop of Genoa, who during his episcopate (945–81) displayed strong pro-Ottonian inclinations.

The document also describes—using a formulaic and standardized vocabulary—the nature of the patrimony of those who appealed to the two kings: one gets the impression that the basis of this social group’s economy was the possession and exploitation of land, both within and outside the city, to the point that they had elaborated a number of *consuetudines* (customary rules) in order to manage these properties.

The relationship between inhabitants and territory defined in 958 gives the impression of a city lacking well-defined institutional structures.² Moreover, the diploma explicitly excludes the intervention of public officials, including the Obertenghi marquesses, who must have held jurisdiction over the city and

1 *LI* 1.1.4–6, doc. 1 (18 July 958). For a general overview of all aspects of Genoese history before the thirteenth century, see Polonio, “Da provincia a signora,” 126ff.; also *DAL* and chap. 3 of this volume.

2 Guglielmotti, “Definizioni di territorio,” 307–8.

its territory from the mid-tenth century, at least formally. We may therefore hypothesize the existence of fairly informal rules governing a society that was nonetheless stratified and politically active. The only marked characteristic of Genoa's inhabitants was landed property—whether allodial, held *in libellum* (long-term lease), or on short-term lease—both within and outside the city walls and the use of the *consuetudines* to manage it.

If the reference to these *consuetudines* in 958 suggests that royal approval gave them the stature of unwritten law, it does not similarly imply the well-defined beginnings of a trend toward self-governance. A century later this situation is much clearer. In 1056 another well-known document³ records the oath taken by marquess Alberto Malaspina—a descendant of the same Oberto (hence Obertenghi) to whom Berengar II entrusted the Genoese territory in the mid-tenth century—to respect the *consuetudo* (custom) of all the inhabitants “who live inside the city of Genoa”: evidently these customs no longer concerned only land management, because the document also mentions limits to marquesal prerogatives in matters of justice and taxation.

Such limitations have allowed scholars to affirm that the act of 1056 was essentially the Obertenghi dynasty's final surrender of their role as public officials in Genoa. On the one hand, this surrender confirms that customary law mainly pertained to issues of land ownership, and on the other it seems to exclude the bishop from all secular matters.⁴ Until this point the bishop's absence is the most meaningful element of this political episode, which exclusively involved the city's inhabitants and the representatives of public power. The few documents extant from the tenth and eleventh centuries allow us to state with certainty that the bishop of Genoa never had governmental responsibilities. Nonetheless, his role was certainly not secondary: he held extensive estates—managed through low-priced long-term leases—which means he was probably the city's greatest landowner.⁵ During the second half of the tenth century, Theodulf (whose sympathies, as previously mentioned, were pro-imperial) undertook a vigorous initiative to reorganize the city's ecclesiastical institutions. Chiefly benefiting the clergy of the episcopal church of San Siro and other religious institutions in the city, this reorganization seems to have touched upon issues that did not directly involve lay landowners.

It is not until 1052, during the episcopate of Oberto, that we get a glimpse of (a perhaps longstanding) conflict between the citizens and the episcopal church. In precisely the same years in which marquess Alberto Malaspina

3 *LI* 1.1.6–9, doc. 2 (May 1056).

4 Bordone, “Origini,” 243–4.

5 *IELM*, 449–78.

swore to respect the *consuetudines* of the inhabitants of Genoa, the bishop granted the monastery of San Siro the right to collect certain tithes in order to address pressing economic needs. These rights had been previously held—or, according to Oberto, usurped—by a group of individuals descended from the *vicecomites* (marquesal officials who originally exercised military and administrative functions), who probably lived in the city.⁶ The document illustrates a complex situation in a seemingly simplified manner. The viscounts' descendants, who by that time had lost their official functions, expressed in an agreement with the bishop their desire—voluntary or coerced is unclear—to alleviate the dire economic conditions of San Siro, which in the past had been the episcopal seat but by that time was occupied by a community of monks. In all likelihood this offer was not dictated by charitable impulses: we can see, on the one hand, an early attempt (at least for Genoa) by the bishop's curia to regain its rights; and on the other, the wish—explicitly stated by the donors—to support the place in which their ancestors were buried.

This episode illustrates a general principle already evident in marquis Alberto Malaspina's oath and the 958 diploma: namely, that tenth- and eleventh-century Genoese society was characterized by the presence of a group of prominent landowners, who by the mid-eleventh century tended to dominate the political scene and consciously organize themselves according to their own rules.⁷ In 1052 those who held rights over certain tithes—described remarkably as *nobiles et potentes* (the noble and powerful)—already possessed political awareness and a markedly elitist perception of their social position; this is evident from their attention to dynastic identity, in particular their identification of a progenitor from whom their lineage descended. This group of *seniores* (lords) can be defined as an urban elite, whose main characteristic was less their role as functionaries with ties to the marquesses (who were apparently absent from the urban political scene) than their awareness of their own social prominence which was based almost exclusively on the income from their lands.

Ownership of land—which is constantly referred to in the extant documents—was a chief factor in establishing a direct and privileged relationship between these persons and the bishop. During the twelfth century this relationship, whose origins are elusive and poorly covered by documentary evidence, was the foundation of what seems to have been a complex clientage

6 Bordone, "Visconti cittadini."

7 In these patterns (although not in maritime commerce, discussed next), early political developments in Genoa paralleled those in other contemporary Italian cities; Jones, *City-State*, 133–40.

network. Those who defined themselves as vassals of archbishop Siro (1130–63), who were referred to by the bishop as *nobiles* (nobles)—using a term that recalls in an almost codified manner both a privileged relationship and their social status—were the same persons against whom the curia took action, especially from the 1130s onward, to affirm its rights over assets which had been endowed provisionally, but over which the archbishop's control had probably loosened. Their ties with the bishop—which were reinforced through a relationship of clientage and through what has been defined a “beneficiary redistribution of incomes” of the curia—helped define the urban elite, which developed its own sphere of influence in a context that “visibly lacked strong institutional powers.”⁸

In addition to their propensity to accumulate land, the elites showed a distinct inclination, perhaps as early as the first half of the tenth century, toward maritime commercial activities; although the evidence is only circumstantial, such activities probably had a major impact on the wealth of these *nobiles*.⁹ In fact, during the tenth and eleventh centuries, commerce—a stereotypical characteristic of medieval Genoa sustained and encouraged by scholarship on the city—appears to have become a fundamental component of the urban economy. The accounts of the Fatimid raid (*ca.* 934–5) are rich in these kinds of descriptions: they contain references to the city's thriving population, its fortifications, and the presence of linen and silk yarns which implied a vibrant economy based on diverse resources in which commerce and maritime activities necessarily played an important role, especially since the Ligurian interior was relatively inhospitable to agriculture.¹⁰

The efforts made to protect Genoa's maritime sphere of influence—which was progressively expanding in the Mediterranean also as a consequence of expeditions against the Saracens in 1015–16 and 1087—demonstrate the awareness of the Genoese that they had consolidated their position within this broader economic landscape. In this sense, the existence of documents attesting commerce between Genoa and Fatimid Egypt during the 1070s, almost on the eve of the Crusades, confirms that from an economic perspective the Genoese had carved out a place of their own beyond the confines of their own shores some time before the development of the commune.¹¹

8 Ibid., 247.

9 Cf. discussion in chap. 3, pp. 81–3.

10 Kedar, “Una nuova fonte.”

11 Kedar, “Mercanti genovesi,” 21–29. On the ties between trade, *compagna*, and crusade, see also chap. 17, pp. 471–77.

Thus the ownership of land, the management of episcopal assets held in benefice, and most likely maritime commerce were the defining characteristics of the segment of urban society that led (although not exclusively) a process of institutional development visible as early as the mid-eleventh century.¹² With these changes that eventually resulted in the establishment of communal institutions—a gradual transformation that also depended on a group of legal experts who may have played an important role in the city's government during the tenth and eleventh centuries—the identity of the urban elite became clearer. The development of government institutions probably coincided with the birth of a new paradigm of social mobility, one less tied to economic status and privileged position in a uncertain political landscape than determined by public relationships with an increasingly strong and complex institutional apparatus.

An Agreement for Governing the City: The *Compagna*

Caffaro's account for 1099 describes for the first time—in a laconic and almost casual manner—what scholars consider to be the earliest nucleus of the Genoese commune: a *compagna* valid for three years and overseen by six consuls.¹³ With the term *compagna*, Caffaro indicates an association of individuals whose exact functions remain obscure due to an incomplete documentary landscape. In order to define this association, scholars have highlighted two closely-related points: first, the chiefly economic nature of the *compagna*, and second, Genoese society's limited ability to establish a strong institutional framework for its government.¹⁴

Institutional weakness is a leitmotif already evident during the tenth and eleventh centuries, when neither bishop nor marquisal officials managed to attain political control of the city. This is not so much the conscious ambition of a society in economic ferment for individualistic self-government, but rather a situation akin to that of many Italian cities of the time. During these years the public sphere was crowded with political actors in competition with

12 Lopez, "Origines du capitalisme." On the twelfth-century Genoese elite, see also chap. 7, pp. 168–71.

13 AGC for 1099, 1.5. On the work of Caffaro and his continuators, see the discussions elsewhere in this volume—chaps. 1, pp. 37–9, and 11, pp. 323–5—as well as Petti Balbi, *Caffaro e la cronachistica*.

14 Bordone, "Origini," 253; Puncuh, *Comuni e memoria storica*.

one another, which resulted in a wide spectrum of experimental possibilities for both society and its urban institutions.

These circumstances facilitated the gradual development of self-regulation which eventually gave birth to the *compagna* and the consulate. Although the documentary evidence cannot prove it with absolute certainty, it seems that from as early as the mid-eleventh century a group of legal experts, notaries, and judges administered justice in the city in the absence of public or officially-designated powers. Around 1080–90, in a city ridden with conflict, the bishop tried to assign a conciliatory role to the city's ecclesiastical institutions, especially to the cathedral chapter of San Lorenzo. In this respect, scholars have hypothesized the existence during the last years of the eleventh century of a “regime of *concordia* [peace or harmony]”: an agreement among the city's inhabitants intended to assure political order and curb continuous discord in the city; this would probably have been based on the same civic structures as the *compagna*.¹⁵

Against this backdrop, the establishment of a system ruled by six consuls before the “official” expedition to the Holy Land (which ended in 1101 with Genoa's participation in the siege of Caesarea) must be seen as a process of relative continuity with respect to the recent past. The *compagna* was a partnership of individuals strongly marked by commercial practice and expressed in a strictly private form: Caffaro himself indicates the temporary and probably circumstantial character of this institution which, at least during this first phase, seems to have constituted nothing more than an embryo of the later commune.

In order to understand how an institutional framework that can be defined as a “commune” emerged from this temporary and private agreement, we must look at the language used in the sources. In his account of the first three decades of the twelfth century, Caffaro uses the term *compagna* to denote the succession of political agreements in the city. In this case *compagna* means “the governing group”: it is the same choice of words he made in 1099, and it is reiterated until 1122. In this sense, the annalist is presenting the city's political events as an almost automatic succession of *compagnae*: after the first three-year agreement, four-year pacts were stipulated during the period 1102–1121.

No extant document describes the precise makeup of the *compagna*: it is evident that the political character ascribed to it must be based on a hypothesis which can only surmised from the sources in an impressionistic manner. In this sense, Caffaro's constant references to both the renewals of the institution

15 Ibid., 252.

and the appointment of new consuls are the most important evidence that place the *compagna* at the center of the city's political scene. The annals present an image of the city in which the continuation of a temporary agreement, each time according to the same framework, was the necessary political foundation for actions both internal and external to the city.¹⁶

Even though Caffaro's work suggests that the *compagna* was the fundamental driving force of politics, at least for the first two decades of the twelfth century, its institutional structure and operations remain obscure. Certainly, the lexical shift in the annals is noteworthy: beginning with the consulate which began in 1122—and together with the establishment of an annual consulate—Caffaro no longer uses the term *compagna*. The urban government was therefore no longer identified with the group from which the consuls were chosen, and the consuls, who were thereafter theoretically at the top of Genoa's political hierarchy, were no longer systematically associated with the *compagna*.

The documents produced by the commune, however, demonstrate clearly that the structure of the *compagna* was still present in the city's political landscape during the second half of the twelfth century. The oath which the Genoese commune imposed on rural lords when it was trying to construct the *districtus*, for example, was a tool of social and political inclusion that regulated the acquisition of citizenship, the imposition of communal taxes, and even participation in military life. It thereby became a fundamental precondition for membership in the consular group.¹⁷

For this reason, we must consider the nature of the oath of the *compagna*: scholars have assumed that this political agreement was connected to citizenship (the status of *cives*, with the associated responsibility of communal taxation), but the link between the oath and participation as *milites* (soldiers) in the communal army is less obvious. In this sense membership in the *compagna*—a structure which survived into the 1170s, when the commune had established its own institutional framework both within the city and in relation to external parties—can be understood not only as a political thing but

16 This is precisely the pattern of early communal development outlined by Chris Wickham, who argues that the elites who put early communal structures in place thought of them temporary and *ad hoc* (*Sleepwalking*, 162–6 and 187–202).

17 For example: *LI* 1.1.17–18, doc. 9 (2 February 1138–1 February 1139); 1.1.18–19, doc. 10 (2 February 1138–1 February 1139); 1.1.19–20, doc. 11 (2 February 1138–1 February 1139). For communal development in Genoa compared to elsewhere: Jones, *City-State*, 355–6, 372–4, 395–401, 408, and 413–15.

also in a social sense as the defining feature of the civic militia: the oath was the means of acceptance into full membership in the Genoese military elite.¹⁸

Throughout the twelfth century the commune used the *scaramentum compagne* (swearing of the *compagna*) in an increasingly deliberate and forceful manner to regulate its relationships with the *domini* (lords) with whom the Genoese came into contact for reasons of territoriality. In 1146 the sources even refer to the *consuetudo comitum et marchionum* (custom of the counts and marquesses), which regulated the relationship of such lords with the city through the swearing of the *compagna* and the *habitaculum* (oath of residence).¹⁹

At first a nucleus of political and social identity, the *compagna* became a tool of institutional enforcement. Swearing to the *compagna*—or better, swearing to uphold all the successive *compagnae*—implied accepting the commune's political control, which in all probability also included the economic and patrimonial spheres. A sort of standard version of the oath taken by the *domini* from the 1130s contains, besides the requirement of residence in the city, a number of conditions which, although somewhat vague in their formulation, are nonetheless readable as attempts to enforce Genoese hegemony over a particular territory and its economy.²⁰

We should call these “attempts” because, probably until the 1160s—with the emperor's formal recognition of the *iura regalia*, or royal rights—the commune still had not stabilized at an institutional level, and had not yet enforced its superiority over local lords in rural areas.²¹ The documents from the first half of the twelfth century that contain oaths to the *compagna* made by local lords represent the convergence of two different set of interests which apparently did not supplant one another. In this sense, the very framework of the text of these agreements—in which the lords express themselves using the first person and at times establish reciprocal obligations between themselves and the commune—suggests that these pacts had a bilateral dimension which does not fully accord with the notion of the city's territorial “expansion” of its political and administrative influence. Before becoming an instrument through which relationships and institutions were established and enforced, and a model of social order which could be exported to areas outside the city, the

18 For a definition of the civic militia and the impact of military activities on society in the Italian communes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Maire-Vigueur, *Cavalieri e cittadini*.

19 *LI* 1.1.159–60, doc. 101 (August 1146).

20 *LI* 1.1.227–8, doc. 154 (1138?).

21 On the growth of Genoese hegemony in Liguria, see chap. 2; on its symbols, chap. 8, pp. 194–9.

compagna was one means of defining a new and unexpected political space, a bond upon which the developing consular government was also based.

These considerations emerge from certain texts which have been rightly defined as the “*de facto* original statutes of the commune”: the *brevia compagne* of 1157 and 1161.²² The contents of these oaths complement what has already emerged from an analysis of the sources. The *compagna* is defined as a “political association,” a social body connected to consular power, whose decrees are observed “from Portovenere to the harbor of Monaco, from Voltaggio to Montalto and to Savignone up to the sea and beyond, putting at the disposal [of the commune] houses, towers, persons, offspring, and servants without deceit or guile.” The *compagna* endowed the urban elite—a group shaped by mechanisms of cooptation and inclusion which are not always documented—with a strong military character, and encouraged its commercial vocation by enforcing a series of restrictions. On the one hand, these demonstrate the desire to create an autonomous political space and control access to it; on the other hand, they seem almost to direct the members of the *compagna* toward a communal organization of commercial practices.

The City’s Government during the Twelfth Century: The Consuls

We can refine our understanding of the identity of Genoa’s communal magistrates by starting from their original function as representatives of a social group that dominated the city’s political scene, establishing its authority over a period of time. The extant documents illustrate how, from a situation of precarious and not fully recognized authority, the commune became the main locus of political representation in the city, probably through sudden shifts and contradictions which are not always documented in the sources.

The few references to the presence of consuls in Genoa in sources from the early decades of the twelfth century, in fact, suggest a fairly fluid political structure, one not limited exclusively to the few members of the *compagna*. Up to the 1120s, Caffaro mentions these consuls only to record their names and associate them with the political group. In this period even Guglielmo Embriaco is recorded with the title *consul*, but the term in this context bears no political connotation as it refers only to his role as military leader of the Genoese expedition to Caesarea.

²² On these, see chap. 6, pp. 146–8. The 1157 document is published in *Leges Genuenses*, cols. 5–14, and *CDG*, 350–59. The 1161 documents are published in Olivieri, “Serie dei consoli,” 176–94, and in Niccolai, *Contributo allo studio*, 115–25.

Instead, the consuls of the *compagna* remain in the background of the events related by the annalist. A clear-cut distinction between the political and judicial duties of the consulate is only discernible in 1130, with the establishment of the seven *compagnae*, or districts, into which Genoa was divided for the administration of justice. Only after this point can we discuss the *consules de comuni* (consuls of the commune) and *consules de placitis* (consuls of the pleas) as officials with discrete and clearly-defined responsibilities.

This was a fluid and still-evolving situation, and unfortunately due to the paucity of sources it cannot be fully understood. It is nonetheless clear that the consular commune took a long time to establish itself as the dominant institution driving the city's politics. Even in 1137, when the framework of government was certainly more structured than during the earliest consular experiments, one document informs us that in the absence of the *consules*, political leadership could be provided by the bishop and the inhabitants of Genoa themselves.²³ This corroborates recent hypotheses regarding the discontinuity of the early communes during the early decades of the twelfth century, when the *consules'* presence as civic leaders was intermittent.²⁴

Not surprisingly, the dominance of Genoa's ecclesiastical institutions also sheds light on the consulate's arduous journey towards institutional legitimacy. The episcopal church continued its relationships with parties outside Genoa, while also maintaining an important political role within the city. This is evident from the case of Filippo de Lamberto, who was consul four times between 1141 and 1161. Sometime between February and April 1147, Filippo was accused of having lost certain goods belonging to a group of Genoese citizens in Sicily, and was accordingly barred from holding public office. The political consequences were serious since in February 1147 Filippo had been elected consul of the commune. Significantly, the group making the decision to bar him from public office included not only the consuls—Filippo's colleagues—but also Archbishop Siro. The archbishop then also appeared alongside the consuls a few months later when Filippo was reinstated after having provided evidence of his innocence.²⁵

The appearance of the archbishop alongside the consuls underscores the challenges inherent in establishing the earliest communal structures as a political reference point for urban society. These challenges generally also apply to the development of other communes in northern and central Italy. Recent scholarship on the topic has highlighted a tendency—deriving from the

23 *LI* 1.1.60–61, doc. 38 (20 July 1156).

24 Milani, *Comuni*, 24–25.

25 *LI* 1.1.147–9, doc. 93 (May–July 1147); 1.1.212, doc. 143 (February–April 1147).

earliest consular institutions' lack of legitimacy—of recourse to the bishop or archbishop, who is often seen as a link between those sectors of urban society that welcomed the new framework of communal government and those that refused to accept it.²⁶

Although such sources demonstrate the relatively slow development of the commune, the *brevia* that the consuls swore when they were appointed, however, show that by the 1140s their responsibilities were already well-defined. The only one of these that still survives dates to 1143 and concerns the *consules pro comuni* (consuls for the commune); it depicts an active consulate, especially in the areas of criminal justice and the control of violence in the city.

In fact, the defense of *concordia* (harmony) is one of the leitmotifs defining the image of the consuls in the annals, as a brief survey of the entries by Caffaro and Oberto Cancelliere for the period between 1099 and 1173 makes clear.²⁷ The consuls are presented, especially by the latter annalist, as those who had to guarantee the safety of all by adopting a policy of non-belligerence in the city and who had to ensure that the city was at peace so that it could meet its military responsibilities, which (especially in its continuing struggle with Pisa) occurred in a seasonal cycle.

A second important feature common to the work of these first two annalists is their portrayal of the consuls as leaders of Genoese military expeditions. On many occasions Caffaro shows the consuls conquering a castle or fighting against a (more or less) dangerous enemy, and with Oberto Cancelliere such references to war occur almost annually. To interpret the annals correctly, however, we must bear in mind one essential characteristic: a recent study has shown that these texts by Caffaro and Oberto Cancelliere are “produced for and aimed at the narrow milieu of the [city’s] dominant groups, namely the members of the communal council and the consuls elected in annual rotation, precisely in order to transmit their ideological strategies for political activity through public reading and consultation.”²⁸ The annals must therefore be considered less an accurate narrative of events than a sort of “mirror for consuls,” a didactic text that offers a model of ideal behavior for the benefit of future magistrates. Seen through a text written for didactic rather than informative purposes, therefore, it is clear that although the consulate presented itself as a fundamental component of civic regulation—a linchpin of political life—the slowness and difficulty of the process by which the commune was established over the course of the twelfth century cannot be denied.

26 Milani, *Comuni*, 24–25.

27 See chaps. 5 and 8 for a fuller discussion of the concern for civic harmony.

28 Guglielmotti, review of Schweppenstette (*Die Politik der Erinnerung*), 208–9.

The Framework of the Consular Commune: Collective Councils and Individual Magistracies

It is extremely difficult to shed light on the institutional framework through which the consular government operated. The sources from which we can gather relevant details are far too vague and fragmented, and at times complex structures are only outlined in the background of a picture, and remain out of focus. I will therefore attempt to give only a general sense here of how the consular government functioned.

First, it is necessary to clarify what we know of the process by which consuls were elected. The first attestation of an established practice comes from Caffaro's annals: in the entry for 1154, Caffaro records that when the four consuls of the commune—entrusted with the city's governance—"were elected ... they refused to take the oath."²⁹ The underlying situation is unclear, but they accepted their mandate only after the intercession both of the archbishop (who urged them to accept the appointment and promised them absolution of their sins), and especially of the *populus* (people), a nebulous entity which Caffaro affirms was the force that convinced the consuls to accept their office but which has nothing to do with the popular movement of the thirteenth century. Nonetheless, consular elections were not always delegated to the citizens. Towards the end of his entry for 1155, Caffaro reports that the consuls for that year elected their own successors, and for this received "praise and glory from all the people of Genoa," who were probably called to ratify an already-made decision.³⁰

On this topic, we should also mention the *parlamentum* (assembly) to which Caffaro refers as early as 1123, presenting it as the body before which the results of a synod with the pope (with the goal of establishing whether dioceses on Corsica should be subject to Genoa or Pisa) were presented. The first evidence for the *parlamentum* dates from two decades later, but this may be a consequence of the increase in the number of documents preserved from the 1140s onward in the communal *Libri iurium*.³¹ It is in front of the *publicum parlamentum* that in 1138–9 certain lords of Cogorno, a dynasty of landowners rooted in the Levante, swore to the *compagna* and committed themselves to taking up residence in Genoa. On this occasion, the *parlamentum* appears to have had its own role different from that of the simple assembly of citizens: the same document distinguishes this oath from the one made by other members

29 AGC for 1154, 1.37–8.

30 AGC for 1155, 1.45.

31 On the *Libri iurium*, see the discussion in chap. 1 at pp. 39–42.

of the same family “in the chapter of the canons of the church of San Lorenzo, before many good men who were present.”³²

By virtue of this dignity, the *parlamentum* was often treated as an official forum for the assembly of those men who by swearing to the *compagna* had acquired the full rights and responsibilities of citizenship. It seems to have had a broad composition, and may have included all the members of the *compagna*. The centrality of this institution as the basis of the consular commune is underscored by the fact that the *populus* was *vocatus ad parlamentum* (summoned to the assembly) in the church of San Lorenzo, the symbol of communal identity.

Even though the *parlamentum* was certainly the body with the widest membership, the difference between it and the *consilium* (council) that often appears in documents is unclear. It is certain that these were two different institutions. This is evident from a document dated 1192, which calls for the renewal in *parlamento super anima populi* (“in the assembly, on the soul of the people”) of a treaty with the counts of Ventimiglia that had originally been signed by the consuls and the *consilium*.³³ In essence, the assembly appears to have been the institutional body responsible both for approving new members of the *compagna* and for ratifying some of the laws issued by the consuls. On the other hand, it is probable that already by the mid-twelfth century, the *consilium*—which always met in the chapter of San Lorenzo—had deliberative functions that, in the absence of unanimity, could be exercised by majority agreement.

Apart from assemblies that supported the consuls’ decisions, the sources for the first half of the twelfth century also mention also a number of officials with particular administrative duties. The first references to the chancellor, *clavarii* (officials in charge of finances), and scribes all date from 1122.³⁴ In 1125, Caffaro informs us that the commune managed to solve the problem of giving public acts and contracts legal value by appointing *publici testes* (public witnesses), carefully chosen citizens whose task was to cosign documents and ratify their contents.³⁵

Of particular interest—not least because of his frequent appearance in our sources—is the figure of the *cintracus*, a salaried official who reported to the consuls; he collected certain taxes, and had a variety of responsibilities: he

32 *In capitulo vero canonice ecclesie Sancti Laurencii, coram multis bonis hominibus qui aderant*: LI 1.1.19–20, doc. 11 (2 February 1138–1 February 1139).

33 LI 1.2.409–11, doc. 420 (17 December 1192, 4 March 1193).

34 AGC for 1122, 1.18; Rovere, “L’organizzazione burocratica” and “Comune e documentazione.”

35 AGC for 1125, 1.23.

summoned the people in the city, suburb and castle to the assembly (*vocare populum ad parlamentum per civitatem et per burgum et per castrum*), whipped thieves and criminals, summoned relevant parties to hearings for the administration of justice, made announcements in the city and throughout the archbishopric (*facere bandum per civitatem et per totum archiepiscopatum*). Finally, during the *tramontana*—especially strong winds from the north—he was responsible for warning the population of the city and its suburbs to beware of fires.³⁶

Finally, the establishment of the consuls of the pleas (*consules de placiti*) in 1130, with two magistrates for each territorial district (or *compagna*: one of the seven, and later eight, districts into which the city was divided) of the city, is extremely important. The consuls of the pleas were responsible for the administration of civil justice according to a rule that plaintiff and consul had to belong to the same *compagna* (district).

The Podestarial Commune (1191–1257)

As early as the mid-twelfth century there are references to violent skirmishes in the city. Apart from an incident surrounding the consular election of 1154, of particular importance is an event that occurred in June 1164, on the occasion of the sojourn in the city of two imperial ambassadors who were escorting the judge Barisone of Arborea to Frederick I to be appointed king of Sardinia. Due to “a few evil young men” from the entourage of Folco di Castello and Rolando Avvocato, two important members of the consular elite, a violent clash broke out that left three dead and many wounded.³⁷ In September 1164, Oberto Cancelliere records the assassination of Marchese della Volta, consul of the commune for that year, who was struck “in his villa where, as a consul, he was safe.”³⁸ This event led to a civil war (as defined by the annalist himself), which led the surviving consuls to conclude that even summoning the *parlamentum* to elect new magistrates for the following year might lead to renewed violence.³⁹ Only in 1169 was a truce concluded with the intervention of the archbishop.

36 *LI* 1.1.13–14, doc. 5 (2 February 1142).

37 *AGC* for 1164, 1.160.

38 *AGC* for 1164, 1.168.

39 *Ibid.*, 1.168–70.

It is evident that the tensions described above were not isolated episodes, but connected to socio-political dynamics inherent to the consular elite. The vocabulary used by the annalists suggests certain changes that resulted from the increased prominence of new social actors in the arena of domestic affairs. However, the civil wars described by Oberto Cancelliere, which continued throughout the second half of the twelfth century, were a consequence of competition—leading to open conflict—for the commune's highest posts, and therefore for a significantly higher degree of power than that held by members of the *consilium*.

In short, the constant increase in the number of families who participated in the government of the city, visible from the early years of the consulate as an institution, became unmanageable, and the existing commune was no longer capable of representing or accommodating even the proposals of the governing elite. For this reason, in 1191 Genoa's political system underwent a radical transformation with the appointment of a foreign *podestà*, in a manner quite similar to developments elsewhere in north-central Italy.⁴⁰ The shift to a podestarial regime was necessary to maintain the governing capabilities of a political elite that was constantly growing in size, especially due to the integration of individuals from those milieux that would later be labeled as popular. The *podestà* became a focal point for all the requests and needs of the consular elite, worthy of respect as an impartial representative of communal power.

As in other central and north Italian communes, so too in Genoa between 1191 and 1216 the government alternated between podestarial and consular regimes. During this period, the commune went through an intense experimental phase that resulted in the restructuring of the entire political system. But the configuration of the highest-ranking political posts in 1191 demonstrates that the podestarial regime was meant to be temporary: alongside the foreign *podestà* at the head of the government, the eight consuls of the pleas presumably continued their administration of justice.

Besides the continuing presence of the consuls of the pleas, new institutions appeared on the Genoese political scene performing duties for which the consuls had previously been responsible. In 1196, alongside the *podestà* and the consuls of the pleas, the annals mention an *aminiculum rectorum* (assistant to the rulers) composed of eight *nobiles* entrusted with those duties which pertained more tangibly to the commune's institutional core: public

40 Jones, *City-State*, 408–19; for general parallels see also the Historical Gazetteer in Waley, *City-Republics* (220–32).

finances, the arming of warships, and the maintenance of defensive castles in the *districtus*.⁴¹

The models of governance that circulated along with foreign officials probably instigated the appearance in 1198 of consuls who acted as magistrates in cases involving persons who were not citizens (*cives*). In 1206, a college of four consuls of the sea was established and entrusted with the task of arming the city's galleys: in essence, they supervised an operation deemed so important that it received, for several years, particular mention in annalist Ogerio Pane's laconic narration of internal affairs. Finally, in 1216, the institutional framework established with the appointment of the *podestà* was reversed: for the last time, the government of the city was held by a college of six consuls, while authority in legal matters was entrusted to foreign *causidici* (advocates). Between 1217 and 1257, the commune was headed by a *podestà* and the administration of justice was similarly entrusted to officials from other Italian cities, while the Genoese elite participated in political life through the institutions of the eight *nobiles*, the consulate of the sea, and especially through the collective body inherited from the twelfth century: the *consilium*. The *consilium*, which supported the *podestà* in his duties, had anywhere from seventy to more than a hundred members, and on certain occasions it was "split" into a "general" council and another, smaller body with its own deliberative powers. Even the *parlamentum* preserved its role as a venue for expressing wider political participation, but it was convened only rarely, on very important occasions—mostly for matters concerning foreign policy—to ratify government decisions already made.

The Ruling Elite between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

During the 1170s the *compagna* was still a political nucleus closely identified with the consular commune: only slowly did the consulate manage to assert itself as a strong and legitimate form of government. Thus the history of the Genoese commune is characterized by the progressive restructuring of its institutions, which gives the impression of an experimental process. The protagonist of this experimentation was a political elite already predisposed to growth and turnover by the mid-twelfth century. In other words, the consular elite was a dynamic and constantly growing group open to the assimilation of new individuals into itself.

41 AGC for 1196, 2.60.

Contrary to what a few Anglophone scholars have recently affirmed, the origins of this group cannot be ascribed to the persistence of vicecomital families, because the sources do not allow precise genealogical reconstructions for the period predating the twelfth century.⁴² Instead, extant documents show that in the decades following 1099 the size of the ruling elite increased constantly, so much so that during the last three decades of the twelfth century the number of families that alternately filled government posts (88) had tripled compared to the number in government during the first thirty years of the commune (32). Regular turnover had a considerable impact on the composition of the political elite, especially during the central decades of the century: between 1160 and 1190, members of new families who were admitted to the consulate amounted to 44% of the total number of families who ever held consular posts.

The lifestyle of these consular families was typical of a military elite, well-acquainted with the practices of war.⁴³ Another chief characteristic was wealth, which was obviously a main precondition for participation in the municipal government but did not automatically lead to political prestige. In this sense, we can affirm that the inclination toward a military lifestyle (and therefore participation to political life) was the result of the combination of economic affluence and conscious choice—which, due to the openness of the ruling elite, provided direct access to government posts.

The same attitude of openness that was evident throughout the twelfth century is also visible in the years 1191–1216, and diminished only during the period between the stabilization of the podestarial regime and the captivity of Guglielmo Boccanegra in 1257. This has been interpreted as a sign of a transformation of the political elite of the consular period into a class of magnates. Certainly the new political opportunities provided by the podestarial regime were claimed mainly by those families whose members had already held consular posts between 1099 and 1216. The contribution of “new men” (*novi homines*, or members of new families) was limited, and in any case these can be associated more with the *milites* than with the popular strata of society.⁴⁴

42 For example, *G&G* and *CASD*, both of which are still influenced by the genealogies produced by nineteenth-century antiquarians, especially by Belgrano, “Tavole genealogiche.” On the relative openness of the consular elite to new families, cf. the discussion in chap. 7, pp. 170–72.

43 For a discussion of the social behaviors of the consular aristocracy see the seminal studies by Hughes: “Domestic Ideals,” “Urban Growth,” and “Kinsmen and Neighbors.”

44 The data and discussion regarding participation in political life are based on my 2010 doctoral thesis, *Famiglie e gruppi*.

The *popolo* seems to have been notably absent from this process. Denise Bezzina's recent study demonstrates that it was very difficult for the artisan segment of the *popolo* to assert its presence in government during the second half of the thirteenth century (a period for which, paradoxically, many fewer public documents have been preserved than for earlier decades). Its relative absence from government was probably due to peripatetic habits coupled with the individualistic work practices typical of artisans and merchants, which resulted in a lack of unity and coordination among non-elites.⁴⁵ Not all of the elements of communal Italy's popular movement can be detected here—for example, coordination based on forms of territorial organization. Nonetheless, from the mid-thirteenth century onward the *popolo* played a major role in the political discourse of the commune, nurturing a new form of rhetoric and prompting institutional transformations notable for their experimental nature.

New Political Experiments: The Popular Captaincies (1257–1339)

A number of outdated studies dealing with the institutional framework of the Genoese commune associate the advent of the podestarial regime with the ascent of a new social and political player: the *popolo*.⁴⁶ According to these studies, this political group—which became formally involved in the city's government only in 1257 with the creation of the *capitanato del popolo*, or the office of “captain of the people” (addressed briefly here)—had already, by the end of the twelfth century, forced the governing consular elite to adopt a podestarial regime to leverage its members' growing economic affluence into political influence.⁴⁷

As we have seen, the establishment of podestarial government in Genoa cannot be explained by the political pressure exerted by rising popular forces, even though the term *populus* appears in the annals as early as the 1160s in reference to those excluded from consular government.⁴⁸ Overall, the designation of “popular” encompassed a variety of social categories, but it did not have any particular political connotation. Pre-existing associative tendencies certainly contributed to the social definition of the *popolo*, such as: alliances formed during the family feuds of the consular era, the institutionalization

45 Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 207ff.

46 On the “rise of the *popolo*” in medieval Italy generally: Jones, *City-State*, 485–521 (especially 496 and 505–21).

47 Vitale, *Breviario*, 9–10; *Magnati e popolani*; Caro, *Genua und die Mächte*.

48 Petti Balbi, “Genesi e composizione.”

of previously-informal neighborhood ties, the common reference point of the parish church, and economic partnerships that fostered the web of social ties. However, if we limit ourselves to what is shown in the sources, it is clear that when speaking of the “popular” group we must distinguish between social sphere and political action. Only in 1227—against a complex backdrop of Frederick II’s policies, which during these years caused the formation of pro- and anti-imperial factions—does the *popolo* appear in the annals as a subject with its own identity, capable of backing a plot organized by Guglielmo de Mari, a member of a consular family.⁴⁹

On that occasion “almost all of the *populares* and many inhabitants of areas outside Genoa” supported the conspiracy against the *compagna comunis*, not only politically, but also by concrete action in the urban landscape.⁵⁰ The fact that the conspiracy failed—quashed by the *podestà* and a majority of the consular elite—confirms that the political equilibria were not much different from those at the end of the twelfth century. Undoubtedly the configuration of the various actors was more complex; while this included the *popolo*, that group did not yet possess all the political tools needed to assert its identity.

Around the mid-thirteenth century, clear signs of change become visible. From 1242 onward, the occupational titles of some members of the *consilium* confirm their non-elite origin.⁵¹ Then in 1257, the *popolo* triggered a vigorous reconfiguration of the communal framework by claiming an active role in government. The city’s political sphere was characterized by constant tension between various parties that reflected broader political dynamics (pro-papal and pro-imperial factions, both of which can be clearly identified during these years); during one of these many upheavals the ambitions of the Ghibelline faction intersected with the aspirations of the popular group. Guglielmo Boccanegra—a banker active during the crusade of Louis IX and a person of some political experience, since he was appointed to the *consilium* at least three times between 1250 and 1256⁵²—was elected *capitaneus populi Ianuensis* (captain of the Genoese people).⁵³

Boccanegra’s title reflects the underlying political dynamics: even if parts of the pre-existing communal framework remained (first and foremost, the office of *podestà*), we cannot deny that the *popolo* now participated in government as a body with an autonomous political identity. In the days that followed

49 Petti Balbi, “Federico II e Genova.”

50 AGC for 1227, 3.30.

51 Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 206ff.

52 Lopez, “Guglielmo Boccanegra.”

53 AGC for 1250–6, 4.24ff. Cf. discussion in chap. 5, pp. 128–30.

Boccanegra's election, the entire government apparatus was restructured: the *consilium* was replaced by a deliberative body composed of thirty-two *anziani* (elders) chosen according to their residence in the old *compagnae*, and the captain was given the power of revising the commune's statutes. Furthermore, Boccanegra was granted a salary, with which he was also expected to maintain his entourage: a *miles* (knight), a judge, two clerks, twelve *guardatores sive executores* (communal guards and enforcers), and fifty armed *servientes sive crientulos* (servants), entrusted with daytime and nighttime protection of his palace and person.⁵⁴

The dire economic situation of the mid-thirteenth century and the expulsion of the pro-imperial faction from government both contributed significantly to these events. The pro-imperial faction had been recently defeated and forced into exile by the pro-papal faction, which had acquired strength due to the election of the Genoese pope Innocent IV (Sinibaldo Fieschi, 1243–54). Given these considerations, and the continued presence of the *podestà* as head of the commune (since he undoubtedly acted as a point of reference for families with longstanding political ties), the results of Denise Bezzina's analysis of the composition of the council of the *anziani* during Boccanegra's captaincy are significant. Although they were a minority, the presence of a group of consular families along with artisans and individuals who had recently acquired political influence confirms the profound commixture of the new popular group and the well-established military aristocracy.

Nonetheless, the popular faction was poorly organized: Genoa's artisan guilds seem to have been less developed than those of other communal cities and, above all, they never managed to produce a consistent stream of members who actively contributed to the operation of the restructured government. To protect its interests, the military aristocracy soon united to oppose Boccanegra's policies, which tended to marginalize the *podestà* and other high-ranking officials. After a mere five years, the government of the *capitano del popolo* came to an end, and the podestarial regime was reinstated, along with its *consilium*.

Eight years later, in October 1270, the *popolo* was among the supporters of a new form of institutional experiment, and this time the outcome was both more effective and longer-lasting. Once again the catalyst was a riot—probably caused by increases in the price of wheat—which polarized two opposing factions whose social backgrounds cannot be clearly identified, but both of which were supported by popular elements. On one side were the Doria and Spinola, families with ancient roots in the consular elite and longstanding

54 AGC for 1257, 4.27.

Ghibelline ties; on the other, the *podestà* and the Fieschi and Grimaldi families, likewise of consular origin but affiliated with the Guelf party.

Once again the Ghibelline faction used new rhetorical and institutional tools to promote its own political legitimacy. In this case, however, the project of “creating the *popolo*” was a self-conscious and mature political program: on the same day as the riot, Oberto Spinola and Oberto Doria were elected “captains of the commune and of the *popolo*”, an expression which emphasizes that the new regime was consciously acknowledging the inclusive nature of the *popolo* and establishing a completely new institutional framework.⁵⁵ In particular, the general council was re-established; presided over by the two captains, its membership included both families of the military aristocracy and a large number of *populares*. The office of *podestà* was maintained, but its responsibilities limited to the administration of justice. In 1276 we see the earliest references to the “abbot of the people” (*abate del popolo*), whose functions and duties, at least for the earlier period, remain obscure.

Unlike the government during the captaincy of Guglielmo Boccanegra, during this period the popular element achieved full integration into the government, and acquired its own identity in the Genoese political sphere. In this sense, the creation of a *società di popolo* in 1270 (as in other Italian communes) confirms the popular group’s self-awareness of its new role in the government alongside the military aristocracy.

Institutionally, the system of the double captaincy persisted until 1290, when major statutory reforms changed the structure of the government yet again. For the first time, the principle of equitable division of political space between *nobiles* and *populares* was established: seats in the council (the highest political body) and the council of the *anziani* (entrusted with less important matters) were distributed equally among the two parties. In place of the two captains as representatives of the military aristocracy, one foreign captain was appointed, aided by the *podestà* and the *abate del popolo*, who was in charge of military and judicial affairs within the *popolo* itself.

Yet even this new institutional framework was short-lived. Continuous internal conflicts among the military aristocracy led to the replacement of the foreign captain as soon as 1295 with the reinstated double captaincy reserved for the Doria and the Spinola, once again with the combined support of the Ghibellines and the *populares*, who were defending similar interests. Finally, in 1300, a government composed of a foreign *podestà*, an *abate del popolo*, and a council of the *anziani* was reinstated in the midst of utter political disorder.

55 AGC for 1270, 4.140ff. For the title cited in the text see for example, LI 1.6.296–8, doc. 1105 (24 November 1276).

The Government of the Doges (1339–1528)

During the first three decades of the fourteenth century, broad internal instability led to a violent civil war between the four main families around whom the nobility had become polarized, which resulted in constant changes in the institutional structure of the Genoese commune.⁵⁶ In this environment, the *popolo*—now endowed with its own sense of identity and solid political experience—devised its own strategy separate from that of the two factions into which the military aristocracy was divided. Thus, despite the nobles' short-lived efforts at reconciliation and one attempt at reinstating a Spinola-Doria diarchy of an exclusively aristocratic character (1335), the pressure of the popular faction started to be felt, especially in the areas of fiscal policy and political representation.

In 1339, led by members of families grown extremely wealthy as merchants and entrepreneurs, the *populares* managed to establish a new political regime and acclaimed Simone Boccanegra as “doge of the Genoese and defender of the *popolo*.”⁵⁷ This represented the affirmation of a political and social group whose influence was based on its economic pre-eminence, and which expressed itself using a new political rhetoric despite having assumed some of the characteristics of the old military aristocracy. Its rise coincided with profound reform of the communal structure, which had acquired a regional character beginning in the 1340s. Since the twelfth century, the territory of the two Rivas had extended from Monaco in the west to Portovenere in the east; this was now divided into vicariates (five, by the mid-fourteenth century) which were in turn subdivided into *podesterie* and *castellanie*, local districts governed by communally-appointed magistrates.

In the city, the doge—who was granted an annual salary—was assisted by a sizable *familia* (staff) composed of close associates who oversaw his safety as head of government and the everyday management of the administration. Among these were a vicar and vice-doges who held authority in civil matters, and notaries working in the chancery who converted the government's decisions into public acts. The main political assembly was the council of the *anziani*, ten to fifteen councilors who contributed to all decisions of major political significance and occasionally intervened in judicial matters. The

56 AG, 73ff. For a general discussion of the political, social and economic aspects of urban society in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: Petti Balbi, “Tra dogato e principato,” 233–43. On the challenges of urban politics: Jones, *City-State*, 585–94.

57 AG, 129–32. Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*.

ordinary administration of civil and criminal justice was entrusted to the *podestà*, a non-Genoese legal expert.

The institutional reforms made under Simone Boccanegra profoundly affected the commune's financial administration. Beginning in the 1340s, the commune's accounts were supervised by the *magistri rationales* (comptrollers of ordinary and extraordinary expenses) and the *massari generales* (accountants) and their subordinates.

Although addressed elsewhere in this volume,⁵⁸ the public debt also deserves a brief discussion here. From the mid-twelfth century onward the Genoese commune began financing its activities (especially military campaigns) by alienating shares of the revenue from indirect taxation, subcontracting the collection of *gabelle* (taxes) to rich citizens. During Boccanegra's captaincy in the 1250s, the commune's debts were consolidated and a system of permanent *compere* (shares) established; by the early years of the fourteenth century this was managed by the creditors themselves with minimal oversight from the commune. Although profoundly opposed by families of the popular faction, who benefited much less from tax farming, the system survived even after the establishment of the dogeship. In 1340 Simone Boccanegra arranged for a new consolidation of the debt. In return for ready money for the commune's treasury, he granted the holders of the *compere* considerable negotiating power which gradually increased until the early years of the fifteenth century, when the *Casa delle Compere e dei Banchi di San Giorgio* took over the management of Genoa's finances. The enormous growth of public debt—a consequence of the commune's financial needs, which were met by tax farming—gave increasing power to those citizens, both *nobiles* and *populares*, who held communal *compere*; this situation facilitated an intersection of political and economic interests that eventually destabilized the dogeship.

During the fifteenth century, Genoa's troubled institutional history was characterized by political instability, the closure of the political elite, and the growing infiltration of financial interests into civic politics.⁵⁹ The structure of the government remained essentially the same as in the fourteenth century: a century after Simone Boccanegra's election, the doge was still assisted by a college of *anziani* and a council (comprising *nobiles* and *populares*) that ratified major political decisions, while the *Officio della moneta* (literally, office of the coin) was entrusted with bookkeeping. In the end, however, the instability of Genoa's political situation—during which very brief dogeships alternated with

58 Chap. 15.

59 This instability affected all areas of life: for its effects on Genoese intellectual culture, see chap. 11, pp. 333–6; on the local religious houses: chap. 13, pp. 386–91.

similarly-fleeting dominations by the king of France or Milanese *signori*—ends by taking on a paradoxical quality: although outwardly the city appeared to preserve its fourteenth-century institutions substantially unchanged, it nonetheless experienced a fluid but inexorable transformation to a shape that little resembled a “communal structure” as it has been described in this chapter.

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Political Alliance and Conflict

Antonio Musarra

Between February and March 1432, the humanist Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, then barely thirty, wrote two letters to his friend Andreozzo Petrucci recounting his impressions of Genoa, in which he was staying while on his way to Basel to be ordained cardinal. In expressing regret for his friend's absence, the future Pius II composed a long eulogy—a veritable *descriptio urbis*—exalting the city's most distinctive features, especially its port, which was protected by

a jetty which they say would have cost little more had it been made of silver: such is the depth of the sea there. It is a safe anchorage for the ships that are always moored there in great numbers. They come and go quickly: enormous triremes resembling mountains, and other types of boats, some from the East and others from the West, so that every day one can observe men of different races, and strange and uncouth customs, but also merchants who arrive bearing all kinds of commodities. Furthermore, in the area of the port that adjoins the city are magnificent palaces all of marble that nearly touch the sky, extremely elegant on account of their numerous columns, many of which are adorned with figures and sculptures. Under these runs a portico about a thousand paces long where one can buy every type of merchandise. The rest of the city extends towards the hills: the tall and beautiful houses there are so elegant and so lavishly decorated that not one of them would be unfit for kings and princes: indeed, all of them are regally majestic, extremely tall, and close to one another. Even the streets are narrow, allowing only two or three men at a time.¹

The contrast—which Piccolomini certainly intended—between the city's beauty and the fractiousness of its inhabitants occupies the remainder of his account. The Genoese, he continues, are clever and respectable men,

1 Piccolomini, *Briefwechsel*, 1.7–10; also excerpted in *GM*, 112–13. I finished writing this chapter in the industrious quiet of the Villa I Tatti (Harvard University, Florence). I wish to thank Carrie Beneš and Carlo Taviani for having involved me in this project.

magnanimous and strengthened by toil; nevertheless they are constantly at odds with one another, and the city is constantly fractured by civil conflict: they deceive each other, seek to cause their neighbors' death or ruin, and are chiefly concerned with killing each other, looting one another's possessions, and sending each other into exile. "O city, how fortunate you would be if only your citizens were at peace!"

Piccolomini's is not an isolated opinion: like other travelers, merchants, diplomats, and intellectuals who visited the city, he considered political instability, discord between families, turbulent changes in government, and occasional subjection to foreign rulers the true measure of Genoa's history. All of these are recurrent features of the city's history, certainly, but Genoa is hardly unique in that: the segmentation of urban society into *partes* (roughly, political parties) and factions, the search for external support at both regional and supraregional levels, and the constant appeals to papal and imperial authority are traits common to the history of most medieval Italian communes. Compared to other cities, however, Genoa has received relatively little scholarly attention, and that chiefly from a general perspective—perhaps because of its extreme complexity, which was notorious even among contemporaries. Only a few studies dealing with specific years or events have examined the problem of conflict in detail, seeking to uncover the logic behind the choices of the main actors.² This is partly a consequence of general indifference toward the city's internal vicissitudes: scholars of medieval Genoa have generally preferred to address other (equally important) aspects of the city's history, such as its economic and commercial dimensions, maritime activities, and "colonial" endeavors.³ Yet this focus on the fortunes (in both senses) of Genoese merchants has contributed to the development of a historiography that describes the city's history as almost exclusively oriented towards the outside world: a "history of the Genoese" forging relationships with most of the countries surrounding the Mediterranean. In reality, the "history of the Genoese" and the "history of Genoa" are two sides of the same coin, and neither can be understood without the other. This chapter therefore seeks to connect the development of a discourse of partisanship—often manifested by conflict—and the relationships which the commune (officially) or its citizens (privately or on the commune's behalf) established with the outside world. As we shall see,

2 Regarding a range of centuries: Inguscio, *Reinterpreting*; Musso, "Stato cappellazzo" and "Colori delle Riviere"; Petti Balbi, "Tra dogato e principato" and "Lassedio"; Polonio, "Da provincia." For a general overview, see Zorzi, "Conflitti."

3 Not without important exceptions, for which see chaps. 4 and 7 of this volume.

there is no single monolithic pattern to be identified; rather, each event must be analyzed in its proper context.

A Ship with Too Many Pilots and No Captain

The earliest references to the city's internal conflicts are provided by Caffaro in his *De liberatione civitatum Orientis* (*On the Liberation of the Cities of the East*), which was written around the middle of the twelfth century.⁴ The annalist reports certain "wars and disagreements" (*guerras et discordias*) that had occurred at the end of the previous century against the backdrop of the conflict between the reformist papacy and the empire. These clashes subsided in view of the imminent participation of most of the Genoese in the crusade, particularly those whom Caffaro defines as *nobiles* (nobles) or *meliori viri* ("better men," men of note and standing).⁵ The chief actors in these skirmishes belonged to a class of *milites* (mounted knights), who were accustomed to using force and lived in fortified tower-houses, a few traces of which still remain in the urban fabric.⁶ Together with other newly-affluent individuals who probably owed their wealth to commerce, this class of knights gave birth (or at least continuity) to the pact of the *compagna*, the original nucleus of the Genoese commune. This group gradually came to constitute the urban aristocracy, which included families of ancient lineage (*vicecomites* and *advocati*), and maintained their dual military and commercial focus.⁷ Like the earliest civic annals, Caffaro's *De liberatione*—which was addressed precisely to this elite—was conceived as an extensive work of propaganda.⁸ Its aim was twofold: on the one hand, it aimed to unite the Genoese against the claims of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (r. 1155–90) by providing them with a model of identity formation focused on their role as champions of Christianity and defenders of the empire. On the other hand, Caffaro's work was also designed to provide Genoa's governing elite (then already riven by conflict) with a handbook for

4 AGC 1.95–124. On Caffaro and his works, see the discussions elsewhere in this volume: chap. 1, p. 37, and chap. 11, pp. 323–5. The *Liberation* is also discussed in chap. 17, pp. 473–4.

5 Caffaro, *De liberatione*, in AGC 1.111. On Genoese involvement in the conflict between empire and papacy and on their participation in the crusade: Musarra, *Partibus Ultramaris*, 83–124.

6 Cagnana, "Torri di Genova"; Cagnana/Mussardo, "Torri di Genova."

7 On the formation of Genoa's communal institutions, see chap. 4; also Bordone, "Origini," and Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 41–50; for a general overview, see the recent Wickham, *Sleepwalking*, esp. 1–20.

8 On the civic annals: chap. 1, pp. 37–8.

political life and a manual of proper conduct, as well as a clear *exemplum* of the pursuit of the common good: an essential prerequisite for countering the emperor's claims efficiently and decisively.⁹

Indeed, internal conflicts had begun to intensify around the mid-twelfth century. The consular *breve* of 1143 prohibited individuals from waging war from towers without the authorization of the consuls, under penalty of a fine or the building's destruction;¹⁰ any behavior which could jeopardize social harmony—homicide in particular—was punished with banishment from the city or exclusion from public office.¹¹ Caffaro emphasizes the consuls' efforts to appease *capillationes et rixas solitas* (literally, "the usual hair-pullings and brawls") in order to restore peace and concord: the atmosphere seems to have been heated, although the annalist does not state the reasons for conflict explicitly.¹² It is only with the annals of Ottobono *scriba* (which begin in 1174) that civic conflict began to be associated with the competitive struggles of certain families over the chief civic magistracies—especially the office of consul, the attainment of which guaranteed greater wealth and prestige.¹³ The reasons underlying civic conflict were therefore less tied to old questions of lineage than the gradual expansion of the urban ruling class.¹⁴ It must be recognized, however, that the threats of Frederick Barbarossa—to whom the commune sent two important legations in 1154 and 1158¹⁵—contributed to existing internal friction. When relations with the emperor deteriorated, the commune both reinforced its ties with Constantinople and moved—apparently in haste—to equip the city with new walls, to avert the risk of an imperial sortie. This had the indirect effect of calming the discord that had given the city the appearance of a ship *sine gubernatore*.¹⁶

9 For a reflection on these issues: Schweppenstette, *Politik der Erinnerung*, 107–208.

10 *CDG* 1, doc. 128.

11 For the case of Filippo di Lamberto, consul in 1141, 1144, 1147, and 1161, see Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 114–21. Similar measures, compounded by tax sanctions, were taken against draft dodgers two years later as part of the Iberian expeditions of 1146–8: *LI* 1.1.146–7, doc. 92 (May 1147).

12 *AGC* for 1161–2, 1.61 and 73.

13 *AGC* for 1190, 2.36; and in general Inguscio, *Reinterpreting*.

14 Hughes, "Urban Growth," 7–8. Day attempts (incorrectly, in my view) to explain these conflicts through an analysis of Genoa's external relations: *Genoa's Response*, 74–82.

15 *AGC* for 1154 and 1158, 1.37–9, 49–51.

16 *AGC* for 1154, 1.37.

The success of the negotiations that led Frederick to grant the Genoese a charter in 1162 was shattered by the resurgence of internal strife.¹⁷ Some opposed the emperor's plan to install a king in Sardinia, where many eminent Genoese families had made their fortunes.¹⁸ Oberto Cancelliere's section of the annals centers around the theme of civic honor (*honor civitatis*); perhaps even more than Caffaro, Oberto conceived of his work as a didactic tool, a sort of "mirror for consuls."¹⁹ Leading the main factions were Folco di Castello (Ingo della Volta's son-in-law), and Rolando Avvocato. The clashes resulted in several casualties, among whom were one of Rolando's sons and Ingo's son Marchese della Volta, who was also a consul.²⁰ The main alliances developed around Ingo's family, whose growing influence was due mainly to its active participation in long-distance trade. Many families who resided between the *castrum* and the *civitas* therefore sought the support of the della Volta: the di Castello, de Mari, de Nigro, Doria, Embriaco, Grillo, Guercio, and Vento—along with the Fieschi, who exploited the situation to gain access to the Genoese political system.²¹ These alliances did not, however, develop according to territorial criteria: even the Spinola, who resided in the *burgus*, were allies of the della Volta, probably for economic reasons as well as political expediency.²² Eventually, after the installation of the podestarial regime in 1191 and a series of clashes between the di Castello and della Volta on the one hand and a group identified as "those of the [episcopal] curia," comprising the Avvocato, Pevero, and de Turca, on the other, the party gathered around the della Volta was defeated.²³ Nonetheless, the economic and commercial relationships established among its allies remained. Further, these skirmishes occurred while vast swathes of the population (amongst whom were Folco and several of his allies) were engaged in the Third Crusade, which suggests a desire to oust the main representatives of the opposing faction from politics. This fact differentiates the Genoese case

17 AGC for 1158, 1.49–52. The 1162 agreement is LI 1.2.20–27, doc. 285 (9 June 1162); see discussion in G&G, 76–8.

18 On Genoa's rivalry with Pisa and especially their conflict over Sardinia, cf. chaps. 2 and 16 of this volume.

19 Bernwieser, *Honor civitatis*, 37–239; Schweppenstette, *Politik der Erinnerung*, 107–208.

20 AGC for 1164, 1.160.

21 The annalist Oberto Cancelliere refers to their faction as the *pars Ingonis de Volta* ("party of Ingo de Volta"): AGC for 1170, 1.231. On the Fieschi: Firpo, *Famiglia Fieschi*, 66–7.

22 On this see Macconi, "Spinola a Genova." On *castrum*, *civitas*, and *burgus*, see chap. 9 in this volume.

23 AGC for 1183–4, 2.19.

from other communes in which conflicting parties generally sought peace by mutual consent.²⁴

Guelfs and Ghibellines: Factional Polarization in the Time of Frederick II

The stabilization of the podestarial government after a long period of brief, alternating consular and podestarial regimes, coupled with the city's participation in the Fifth Crusade between 1218 and 1220, led to a suspension of hostilities, but this was short-lived. Political debates came to be polarized around relatively few families—the de Mari, Embriaco, Fieschi, Grimaldi, Guercio, and Spinola—all having in common the possession of vast estates outside of the city and/or early footholds in both major and minor Mediterranean enclaves. Furthermore, during this period, the Genoese *popolo*—already a social force—gradually gained political coherence and set itself in opposition to some of the nobility.²⁵ In 1227 a group of *populares* participated in Guglielmo de Mari's (ultimately unsuccessful) conspiracy against the commune, and especially against the authoritarianism of several *podestà* who opposed the policies of Frederick II, who was forcefully attempting to assert imperial authority over the cities of northern Italy. The emperor's claims—which had the effect of diverting the attention of Genoa's various factions toward wider concerns—had simplified the political scenario. As late as 1212, following Frederick's official recognition of the Genoese *districtus* from Ventimiglia to Portovenere, unanimous local approval of Frederick II is still evident. The problems began after 1220, as a reaction to the protectionist approach taken in Frederick's Assizes of Capua, which deprived the Genoese of their advantageous position in Sicily.²⁶

Nonetheless, the Genoese did not take part in the anti-imperial Lombard League of 1226. In exchange for their neutrality, their rights and the title of *fideles imperii* (the faithful of the emperor) were reconfirmed. The following year, however, the emperor sent the imperial legate Tommaso, count of Savoy, to support anti-Genoese uprisings by the Savonese, Albengans, and Enrico II del Carretto, with the aim of threatening the Genoese families most hostile to

24 For a good synthesis see Milani, *Comuni italiani*, 61–71.

25 AGC for 1188–90, 2.28–36. For a reading of the episode based on relations with Frederick II: Petti Balbi, “Federico II,” 72–5. On the rise of the *popolo*, see Petti Balbi, *Una città*, 116–36, as well as chap. 7, pp. 176–7.

26 AGC for 1221 and 1223, 2.170–3, 192–3. For relations with Sicily, see esp. Macconi, *Grifo e l'aquila*.

him. The first clashes had occurred after Frederick became king of Jerusalem in 1225; when he came into conflict with the barons in the Holy Land, the Genoese supported the latter in order to protect their interests in the area.²⁷ After Frederick's victory over the Lombard League at Cortenuova (1237), which was followed by his request for formal submission, the commune openly took a stance: the refusal by many families to take the oath of fealty marks the end of Genoese neutrality. In 1239, those same families—the Cibo, Embriaco, Grimaldi, Gattilusio, and Malocello—were working alongside the *podestà* as the Council of Eight, nobles entrusted with the financial administration of the commune. Subsequently, they oversaw the exclusion of the city's pro-imperial groups (the della Volta, Doria, Grillo, Pevero, and Spinola) from participation in public life.²⁸ This marked the beginning of a fracture within the Genoese nobility—a situation echoed across north-central Italy—which saw the pro-imperial group (Ghibellines, who in Genoa were called *Mascherati*) opposing the pro-papal group (Guelfs, in Genoa called *Rampini*).²⁹

The rationales underlying individuals' or families' choice of faction must remain unknown. It is unlikely that they included ideological reasons; on the contrary, divisions along family lines are most notable, probably as a consequence of latent rivalries. Undoubtedly most were mainly interested in safeguarding their interests and privileges. This is certainly true of the Doria, who openly opposed the papacy in order to protect their interests in Sardinia. In any case, the situation became so heated that the *Mascherati* were banished from the city and the main Guelf families—Fieschi, Grimaldi, Lercari, Lomellini, and Malocello—took power. Some of those who had been expelled—for example Nicola Spinola and Ansaldo de Mari—offered their services to the emperor, finding a welcome in Ghibelline Pisa nearby. In 1241 Pope Gregory IX asked the commune to provide escort to Rome for the clerics summoned to a council being convened to depose the emperor. But the attempt ended in disaster: on May 3 of that year the Genoese fleet was intercepted and defeated by the Pisan-imperial fleet near the Isola del Giglio. Determined to counter immediately the indignity they had suffered, the Genoese organized an anti-Pisan

27 AGC for 1231, 3.55–6; Musarra, *Partibus Ultramaris*, 373–81.

28 Petti Balbi, "Federico II," 116.

29 AGC for 1238, 3.88. The origins of these terms are uncertain, but the first may derive from the Provençal term *masca* (witch or masked person) used derogatorily to refer to the imperial partisans: Petti Balbi, "Genova" (*Federiciana*). See also the classic Vitale, "Guelfi e ghibellini."

“crusade” that nevertheless came to nothing.³⁰ The election of Pope Innocent IV (Sinibaldo Fieschi) in 1243 further exacerbated tensions. The Fieschi, who by this time were the recognized leaders of the Guelf faction in Genoa, secretly organized a fleet and succeeded in escorting the pope from Rome to Genoa, from which he could easily reach Lyon to open the First Council of Lyon—which did in fact depose Frederick on 17 July 1245.³¹

During this period the pope's influence over Genoa's communal leadership is evident. One immediate example of this is the broad participation of the Genoese in the first of the two crusades headed by King Louis IX of France (the Seventh: 1248–54), for which the city provided ships, crews, and admirals.³² After Frederick's death in 1250, however, the situation began to stabilize. At the pope's request, the Fieschi granted an amnesty to those who had been exiled; this was reinforced by marriage alliances and indemnities for those whose possessions had been damaged, making the Genoese response somewhat different from other Italian communes where the social fabric changed profoundly following the exile of defeated factions.³³ This behavior was probably motivated by the desire to unite the Genoese nobility against the growing ambitions of the *popolo*, but it is also likely that the Guelfs also thought the exiled factions were more dangerous outside the city than inside it, especially considering the recalcitrance of the communities of both Rivas, which regularly resisted Genoese attempts at subjugation. Savona, Albenga, and other smaller communities in the Ponente were quickly subjected; but in the Levante, the Malaspina family tried to carve out a degree of autonomy for itself by challenging Innocent IV's plan to construct a vast territorial dominion in the Lunigiana for his nephew Nicolò.³⁴ On the whole, Genoa came out of this struggle strengthened: in 1254 the Pisans were forced to abandon the castle they had built in Lerici (across the Gulf of La Spezia from Portovenere) despite the defiant inscription they had placed over its door: “Close the mouth of the Genoese; inflict pain on the Portovenere; seize the merchandise of the Lucchese.”³⁵ At this point it was obvious that the Genoese were determined to

30 AGC for 1241–2, 3.104–5, 129. The episode was immortalized by the Genoese Ursone da Sestri: *Poema della Vittoria*, 92–3.

31 AGC for 1244, 3.151–6.

32 On participation in the new crusade, see chap. 17 in this volume and Musarra, *Partibus Ultramaris*, 404–15.

33 Milani, *Comuni italiani*, 108–31.

34 Firpo, *Famiglia Fieschi*, 42–5.

35 *Stopa boca al Zenoese, clepa cor al Portonarese, strepa torssello alo Lucchese*; AGC for 1256, 4.21.

achieve supremacy over the northern Tyrrhenian Sea, an ambition supported by the broader Guelf coalition. It is certainly not coincidental that during these decades the seal of the commune (fig. 58) portrayed a griffin standing over an eagle and a fox—the symbols of the empire and Pisa respectively—surrounded by the motto *Griphus ut has angit, sic hostes Ianua frangit* (as the griffin chokes these, so does Genoa annihilate her foes).³⁶

The (Arrested) Flight of the Griffin

The relative internal stability heralded by Frederick II's death in 1250 held until the early 1290s, albeit inconsistently: even these decades, in fact, were occasionally vexed by social unrest, which was particularly evident after the end of the Seventh Crusade (1248–54). Louis IX's insolvency and the resultant sudden drop in shipbuilding activity triggered a financial crisis that, between 1255 and 1257, pushed several Genoese banks into bankruptcy.³⁷ These factors paved the way for the assertion of the *popolo* (the "popular party"): in February 1257, aided by a number of *potencioribus civitatis* ("more powerful men of the city," probably Ghibellines), the *popolo* acclaimed their member Guglielmo Boccanegra as *capitano del popolo*.³⁸ A number of noble families played a role in these events, mostly those who resented the dominance of the Fieschi and—as in 1227—manipulated the *populares* to their own advantage. The nobles eventually rescinded their support, especially after Boccanegra adopted a series of fiscal provisions that undermined their interests. A first riot in January 1259 was quelled immediately. Boccanegra further retaliated by declaring illegal all the incomes deriving from tax farming for the following year, and ruled that profits should be reimbursed in exchange for an annual dividend of 8%. This measure was met by growing discontent, and in 1262 another uprising—probably led by the Grimaldi and certain individuals from the more affluent sectors of the *popolo*—put to an end to Genoa's first experiment in popular government.³⁹

In this way the opposing factions that had developed during the years of conflict with Frederick II returned to Genoa. They were led by the Fieschi and Grimaldi on the one hand, and by the Doria and Spinola on the other: the so-called *quatuor gentes* (four lineages) around which the different factions

36 Also discussed in chap. 8, pp. 196–7.

37 Lopez, *Prima crisi*; Guerello, "Crisi bancaria."

38 AGC for 1257, 4.25–7. On the election and the regime of Boccanegra: Caro, *Supremazia*, 1.15–122; Lopez, "Boccanegra"; see also discussion in chap. 4, pp. 113–5.

39 AGC for 1262, 4.45–6.

eventually coalesced. A new element contributed to the formation of these factions: the *albergo*, a confederacy of aristocratic families bound by kinship or economic interest, which probably emerged from a need to counteract the growing influence of the *popolo*. Once again violent conflicts ensued: in 1263 an attempt by admiral Simone Grillo to reinstate the popular government was foiled. In 1265 Oberto Spinola and certain young men from his *albergo* (*quibusdam iuvenibus de albergo suo*) made another attempt which similarly failed—yet Spinola's aristocratic connections remind us that we should not frame such political divisions as a simple binary opposition of “the aristocracy” versus “the people.”⁴⁰ On October 28, 1270, following agreements with Charles of Anjou that undermined the commune's autonomy, another uprising occurred while much of the city's population was absent on a second crusade led by Louis IX.

In the aftermath of these events, the so-called popular “double captaincy” was established, in which the city was ruled by two *capitani del popolo* at a time. The diarchy was a peculiar form of institutional experiment that managed to maintain peace in the city for two decades.⁴¹ At the same time, however, the Fieschi continued to maneuver for an active role in government, profiting by their connections with the papal curia and their extensive lands in the Levante, and above all by supporting the claims of the Angevins in southern Italy. Ghibelline forces began coalescing around Genoa: the marquess of Monferrato Guglielmo VII, the citizens of Asti and Pavia, Alfonso X of Castile and Peter III of Aragon. When *capitano del popolo* Oberto Doria led a Genoese fleet to attack Menton (then occupied by the Guelfs) in July 1274, Cardinal Ottobuono Fieschi persuaded Pope Gregory X to issue an interdict against Genoa—a measure only revoked in 1276 after an agreement was reached with Charles of Anjou, which also allowed the Guelfs readmittance to the city.⁴²

Some of the Genoese government's stability in the face of these challenges can be credited to the common interests of the two *capitani*, Oberto Doria and Oberto Spinola. Not long afterward, however, the two came to bitter disagreement, as we can surmise from several references in the annals of Jacopo Doria,

40 AGC for 1264–5, 4.54, 65, 69–71. Opinions vary on the origin of the *albergo*. Heers (“Consorterie et alberghi”), for example, maintained its lack of originality, linking it to the “clan” and to familial associations from the rural world transferred into the city. Grendi (“Profilo storico”), by contrast, has stressed its socio-political value and the absolute uniqueness of the Genoese context. See the discussions in chaps. 7, pp. 172–3 and 177, and chap. 9, pp. 232–5.

41 AGC for 1270, 4.139–41.

42 AGC for 1276, 4.177.

Oberto's brother; and meanwhile, Oberto passed his office to his son Corrado.⁴³ The diarchy gradually began to resemble a *signoria*, while its form of government concurrently began to be perceived as unrepresentative of the general interest. In 1288 a renewed agreement between the Ghibellines and the *populares* led to the re-election of the two *capitani* for another five-year term; perhaps on account of the growing unrest, however, Oberto Spinola and Corrado Doria were sworn in for only three years. The situation was further complicated by a delay in the election of the Genoese archbishop, who was replaced temporarily by apostolic administrator Opizzo Fieschi—an influential member of the family, who had already served as patriarch of Antioch—whose appointment met with general disapproval. Violent conflict resumed, fuelled by the hardships resultant on political policies chiefly oriented toward maritime expansion.⁴⁴ At the end of their mandate in 1290, the *capitani* retired, leaving the city on the brink of civil war; this was forestalled only due to the renewal of hostilities with Venice and probably also by the election of a new archbishop, the eminent Dominican Jacopo da Varagine.⁴⁵

Despite Jacopo's commitment to civic peace—in pursuit of which he promoted a general reconciliation in 1295—civil conflict persisted relentlessly. In the winter of 1295–6, the Ghibellines went so far as to set fire to the cathedral in order to chase out the Guelfs, who were subsequently exiled.⁴⁶ The double captaincy was reinstated, but relations between Doria and Spinola deteriorated, and in 1306 a full-fledged civil war broke out after the *quatuor gentes* united in coalition against the Spinola of Luccoli, a branch of the family led by the rich and ambitious Opizzino.⁴⁷ Emerging victorious, the Spinola allied with Bernabò Doria to institute a third double captaincy, attempting shortly thereafter to establish signorial domination over the city with popular support. Renewed animosities eventually forced the Genoese to seek the intervention of an external mediator in hopes of restoring civic equilibrium. The occasion was provided by the arrival in Italy of Emperor Henry VII, who stirred general hopes of pacifying the peninsula.⁴⁸ On November 3, 1311, Genoa and its *districtus* were handed over to the emperor for twenty years. While this move was championed by Opizzino Spinola and the Doria—who inserted the imperial eagle in their coat of arms—and supported by the Fieschi, it met

43 AGC for 1285, 5. 70–1.

44 On Mediterranean conflicts, see chap. 16 in this volume.

45 Caro, *Supremazia*, 1.241–72.

46 Recounted in JVC, 2.412, but see also Anonimo genovese, *Poesie*, 383.

47 Caro, *Supremazia*, 2.200–29, 252–327; Gorla, “Lotte intestine.”

48 Bowsky, *Henry VII in Italy*.

with general bewilderment elsewhere. In the end, the emperor's sovereignty was short-lived: Henry's *signoria* was beleaguered by the sad loss of his wife Margaret of Brabant (part of whose funerary monument, fig. 43, is preserved in Genoa at the Museo di Sant'Agostino) and affected by internal divisions among the Ghibelline faction; it eventually fell apart after the emperor's departure in 1313. Despite these failures, however, Henry's rule over the city set an important precedent both for internal Genoese politics and its relationships with external political bodies.⁴⁹

From Civil War to the Establishment of the Popular Dogeship

The early decades of the fourteenth centuries were again characterized by internal instability, which was noted by historians and intellectuals such as Giovanni Villani and Francesco Petrarca.⁵⁰ Genoa's situation was also acknowledged by the historian al-'Umari of Damascus, a secretary at the Mamluk court, who based his account on information he obtained from a Genoese citizen he called Belbān (sparrow-hawk), which encapsulates the political dynamics of the first three decades of the fourteenth century:

The people of Ganwah [Genoa] are governed by a commune and never had nor will ever have a king. Authority is exercised by two houses in this manner: a man from each one of these houses governs for a year and afterwards he gains custody of the sea. One of these houses belongs to the Doria, and Belbān, who gave me this information, was born in it. The second belongs to the Spinola. Belbān says that after these are the houses of Grimaldi, Mallono, De Mari, San Tortore [Tartaro?], Fieschi [...].

In any case, it is Genoa's maritime power and the extent of its dominions that capture his interest:

The dominion of the Genoese is scattered. They possess Galata, in the southern part of Constantinople, and Caffa on the Black Sea: if they were to unite all their subject territories, it would take about three months to cross them; but they are very far apart, without any connection holding them together, or a high-minded king able to bind them. [...] Each of the noble families mentioned above possesses a certain number of

49 Assini, "Genova negli anni"; Petti Balbi, "Uno dei fallimenti."

50 Giovanni Villani, *Nuova cronica* 9.115 (259); Petrarch, *Familiare* 14.5 (2.237–42).

ships, which taken together amount to about five hundred in number. The Genoese army is not manned by military favors or conscription; rather, anyone who possesses immovables or an income is obliged to provide a number of knights who mount a horse or a ship, depending on circumstance.⁵¹

The fractiousness of the noble families, the swathes of territories “without any connection keeping them together,” and the military prowess of individuals able to mount “a horse or a ship, depending on the situation” are not merely literary tropes, but a cogent picture of the city’s politics and society, the peculiarities of which were becoming increasingly pronounced. After the end of Henry’s brief rule, the city plunged into a long civil war during which the exiled Guelfs and the Doria opposed the Spinola. In 1317, the Guelfs managed to re-enter the city; they appealed to Robert of Anjou for support, and on July 27, 1317, Robert (representing both himself and Pope John XXII) was granted a *signoria* over the city for ten years, with the aim of using the Genoese fleet to reconquer Sicily. This idea was rejected by Genoa’s banished Ghibellines, who gained the support of the Visconti of Milan and besieged the city, placing Genoa under naval blockade.⁵²

Genoa therefore participated actively in the broader Italian struggles between Guelfism and Ghibellinism. Furthermore, during this period external actors played a crucial role in Genoese politics: their influence was felt much more than in the previous half-century. Beyond that, a new feature can also be observed: combat between *intrinseci* and *extrinseci* (the “internals” and the “externals”, as annalist Giorgio Stella defines them—the Genoese in Genoa vs. Genoese exiles outside the city⁵³). Mainly conducted at sea, this type of conflict also began to appear in the Genoese colonies, which until then had remained untouched by this type of factionalism. Relying on Genoa’s long-standing ties with the Palaiologi, who were threatened by ongoing Angevin designs on Constantinople, the Genoese in Pera launched several corsairing ventures against Guelf ships, which were systematically blocked from crossing the Bosphorus strait. The situation was exacerbated by the outbreak of hostilities between the *intrinseci* and the crown of Aragon; the Aragonese fleet was repeatedly involved in skirmishes with the exiled Ghibellines (mainly the Doria), who allied with Pisa to challenge the Aragonese for control of Sardinia.

51 Stasolla, *Italia euro-mediterranea*, 290–91.

52 For the Angevin *signoria* in Genoa and the events of the siege: Abulafia, “Genova angioina”; Petti Balbi, “L’assedio.”

53 For example, *AG*, 107–9.

In 1331, an Aragonese army attacked the coast of Liguria, almost threatening its cities. In view of the imminent danger the Guelfs decided to negotiate, and on September 2 of that year, in Naples, Genoa's Guelfs and Ghibellines signed a mutual peace that was also imposed on the city's overseas possessions. The struggle with Aragon, continued, however, being characterized by corsairing ventures and a few episodes of open conflict. A new truce was reached only in 1336, when Angevin rule in Genoa was replaced by a new Ghibelline double captaincy: Sardinia remained under Aragonese control, with the exception of the fiefs of the Doria, while the Genoese claimed Corsica, over which they exercised undisputed supremacy for more than a century.⁵⁴

This long period of conflict closed with an event that profoundly changed both the city's institutional framework and its balance of power. The insolvency of King Philip VI of France (r. 1328–50), who had recruited ships from along the Ligurian coasts to support his war against Edward III of England, prompted rioting in Savona that spread along the coast and eventually almost reached Genoa, where the situation was already tense. During the war with Aragon the *capitani* had monopolized the election of the *abate del popolo* (literally, abbot of the people), the magistrate who represented the *popolo* in the civic government. Faced with growing discontent, the government yielded to the demands of the *populares*, and on September 23, 1339, they agreed to the election as *abate* of Simone Boccanegra, grand-nephew of the first *capitano del popolo* and a member of a family with close Ghibelline connections. Simone, however, renounced the title of *abate*—perhaps because it was too reminiscent of the previous regime—and chose instead to be acclaimed with the title of *dux* (doge), a title previously unused in Genoa.⁵⁵ The connection with Venice is evident: Genoa's second doge, Giovanni di Murta, declared that he wanted to govern *ad modum Venetiarum ducis* (in the manner of the Venetian doge), which meant that he wished to follow specific *Regulae*, or sets of laws, clearly with the aim of avoiding the office's transformation into a personal *signoria*. The two models only partly coincided, however. In both Genoa and Venice the office of doge was theoretically held for life—although few in Genoa managed to hold the office for long—and chiefly represented the merchant class. However, while in Venice the merchant oligarchy was essentially the aristocracy, in Genoa *nobiles* and *populares* both participated in commercial activity.⁵⁶

54 AG, 110–21.

55 AG, 129–32. On the creation of the dogeship: ch. 4, pp. 116–18, and Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, esp. 20–30.

56 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 23–6.

Nevertheless, Boccanegra's ascent was less a victory for the Ghibellines—or rather, of the *popolo* as a whole—than that of the *popolo*'s most eminent segment: the *mercatores* (merchants), a term which gradually acquired a political meaning beyond its social and economic implications, identifying those who became rich as a consequence of their participation in commercial, military, and financial activities, some of whom had adopted a lifestyle and attitudes typical of the nobility, who also participated in mercantile and credit activities. It is not by chance, therefore, that in the sources the two groups are usually separate, the former being referred to as *mercatores de populo*.⁵⁷ The *mercatores* exercised a sort of protectorate over the *artifices* (the members of the *artes* or guilds: that is, those who exercised a trade): notaries, bankers, ship-owners (who constituted a distinct group), teachers, woolworkers, drapers, and apothecaries, but also migrants and the poor.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, members of the nobility were barred from all magistracies although they continued to be appointed to posts in Genoa's dominions, on diplomatic missions, and in the city's fleet. The nobles eventually managed to gain some ground back, but it was a long and tortuous process: the magistracies were once again divided equally between *nobiles* and *populares* only with the *Regulae* of 1413, which confirmed the popular, Ghibelline origin of the dogeship.⁵⁹

The Ascent of the Cappellazzi

Simone Boccanegra's death in 1363 triggered a series of tumults led by several influential families from the popular faction (Adorno, Campofregoso, de Franchi, Giustiniani, Guarco, Luxardo, Maruffo, Montaldo, and Vignoso), a few of which continued to compete for the dogeship for a long time. These were the so-called *cappellazzi*—a term used frequently in the fifteenth century, probably deriving from Latin *caput* (head)—leaders of the *popolo* who took power by force with the assistance of members of the nobility, who in exchange received grants and privileges both on the Rivas and in the interior. Some of these families became increasingly detached from the remainder of the *populares*—so much, in fact, that they eventually constituted a separate category: a new class of magnates who were distinguished by their great wealth, but differed from the nobility in that they were eligible to hold communal office.⁶⁰

57 Ibid., 26–30, 203–92.

58 For a more accurate characterization, see chap. 7, pp. 171–2.

59 Forcheri, "*Societas populi*," and, generally, Savelli, "*Capitula, regulae e pratiche*."

60 This is well known, and not exclusive to Genoa: GC, 101–25.

All of these families were of humble origins: the Adorno, for example, who were probably from Taggia, were originally drapers, but eventually expanded and diversified their commercial interests into banking.⁶¹ The Campofregoso, who came from the villages overlooking Rivarolo in the immediate suburbs of the city, owed their fortune to commerce.⁶² Most likely, they came to power by taking advantage of the internal fractures of the noble and popular factions, but beyond that, we should not discount the support of an unknown number of *fideles* from the lower strata of the city's population and the suburbs. The client network of the Campofregoso, for example, included the inhabitants of the *pieve* in which they originated, and those of the neighboring *pievi* of Serra, Sant'Olcese, and Santo Stefano di Larvego. But these families also recruited *fideles* at a regional level, seeking out the support of powers that had traditionally opposed Genoese supremacy, such as the city of Savona and the Del Carretto marquesses.⁶³ This was true, for example, of Antoniotto Adorno, who seized the dogeship three times by force and once by acclamation, and who was supported by numerous external powers. During his last term, Antoniotto became involved in the great political schemes of the period when Liguria became the focus of the expansionist ambitions of Duke Louis I of Orléans on behalf of his brother Charles VI of France. Antoniotto therefore resorted to a practice that by then had become well-established, and offered Charles VI the lordship of Genoa; on October 23, 1396, Genoa passed under French rule. Antoniotto briefly held the office of governor, but was replaced by Guelf representatives of the king; this led to other skirmishes that prompted the king to send one of his most trusted men to Genoa: Jean Le Meingre, lord of Boucicaut, marshal of France, who dragged the reluctant city by force into a new crusade, the goals of which were unclear and the outcomes of which were actually detrimental to Genoese interests in the eastern Mediterranean.⁶⁴

Again, Genoa's submission to foreign rule did not actually end factional conflict. On the threshold of the fifteenth century, we can distinguish six main factions since the nobility, merchants, and *artifices* each had their Guelf and Ghibelline partisans; to these we must also add the partisans of the Adorno and Campofregoso respectively. Individuals belonging to the various factions

61 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 218–23; Chiavari Cattaneo Della Volta, *Adorno=Adornes*, 9–16; Wardi, *Strategie familiari*, 23–8.

62 Grendi, "Profilo storico," 243; GC, 349–78.

63 In general, Musso, "Stato cappellazzo."

64 Wardi, *Strategie familiari*. On the regime of Boucicaut and more generally on relations between Genoa and the kingdom of France in the fifteenth century: Lévy, *La monarchie et la commune*.

could be identified by the different color combinations on their emblems and in their stockings (called *calze alla divisa*): for example, black for Guelfs; white for Ghibellines; black and white (or simply black) for the Campofregoso; black and yellow for the Adorno; yellow for the Doria (but only in the Rivas); yellow and red for the Spinola (likewise, in the Rivas), and so forth.⁶⁵ Particular individuals' reasons for allying with particular factions are often unclear, although social and economic factors probably played some part, as did ties of birthplace and neighborhood. For example, the Campofregoso, who lived in the borough of San Tommaso on the city's western outskirts, were supported by the inhabitants of that area, who were mostly tanners and dyers. The Adorno, by contrast, lived in the area of Sant'Agnese and around Piazza Fossatello (also known as the *contrada delli Adorni*), and could count on the support of those in that neighborhood, as well as many inhabitants of the borough of Santo Stefano beyond Porta Sant'Andrea, where numerous wool workers and silk weavers lived.⁶⁶ In addition, several influential families of the merchant class such as the Sauli and Giustiniani allied with the Adorno. In any case, these factions retained a certain fluidity.⁶⁷

Vacillation depending on convenience can also be seen in the alliances of noble families with the Adorno and the Campofregoso—although a certain convergence of interests, strengthened by ties of marriage, occur between the Campofregoso and the the Doria and Grimaldi on the one hand and the Adorno and the Spinola, Malaspina, and Del Carretto on the other. We should not assume, however, that these alliances were acts of submission by the nobility. They still retained an influential role in manipulating internal politics from the outside, so to speak, often tilting the balance one way or the other. This was partly due to the *alberghi*, which from relatively humble beginnings in the second half of the thirteenth century had grown dramatically in strength and influence.⁶⁸ They were especially powerful at the regional level, where the commune was struggling to assert its supremacy in the face of numerous challenges: factionalism; the tendency of certain families to assemble personal and family lordships along the Rivas and in the Oltregiogo (near any major routes where they could control travel and communications); and the proximity of large centers of power like Florence and Milan. Milan, in particular, held great influence over the Oltregiogo, whose various lords and communities

65 In any case, changing party affiliations (*colori*) was not unusual: Musso, "Stato cappellazzo," 265.

66 *UCP*, tables v, vii; Wardi, *Strategie familiari*, 17–19.

67 Musso, "Stato cappellazzo," 223–33; Pacini, "Presupposti politici," 166–7, 176.

68 Grendi, "Profilo storico"; Pacini, "Presupposti politici," 403–13.

supported first the Visconti, then the Sforza. In 1421, for example, during the second Visconti *signoria* over Genoa, Milan granted to the Campofregoso—specifically, Tommaso Campofregoso—the lordship of Sarzana in the easternmost Levante. Tommaso led Genoese politics until the middle of the century, influencing many of its decisions, especially in international politics. He served as doge between 1415 and 1421, and when returned to office in 1436 he decided to tighten Genoa's alliances with Florence and Venice in order to counter the Visconti of Milan, who were trying to involve themselves in Genoese affairs; at the same time, his alliance with René of Anjou pushed the Visconti to support the ambitions of Alfonso V of Aragon toward Naples. All this provoked new internal divisions between the supporters and detractors of the Campofregoso that dragged on for years.⁶⁹

Competition for the Dogeship

The participation of the Adorno and the Campofregoso in commercial and financial ventures such as the *Mahone* of Chios and Cyprus⁷⁰ resulted in the gradual but increasingly forceful rise of both families during the second half of the fourteenth century. They therefore emerged as Genoa's leading families in the fifteenth century—a period notable for political instability, which is evident in the city's repeated recourse to external intervention (usually, but not invariably, by granting control of the city to an external power), alternating with frequent returns to the dogal regime that at times veered into personal *signoria*. Torn apart by factional warfare and economically weakened by the commune's constant recourse to loans and special taxes to meet military costs, the Genoese voluntarily granted rule over the city to the French or the Milanese, only to return to self-government when these were no longer bearable. These upheavals also corresponded to broader Mediterranean conflicts, chiefly with the crown of Aragon, which sought to assert supremacy over trade routes in the western Mediterranean.

Neither the Adorno nor the Campofregoso were sufficiently powerful to assert full authority over the city, so their dogeships alternated throughout the century due to frequent changes of regime. Factional conflicts—in which other families allied opportunistically with one or the other dominant family—became increasingly violent. For example, the so-called *guerra di mezzo*, which lasted for about three months in 1414, saw the supporters of doge

69 Ivaldi, "Signoria dei Campofregoso"; Petti Balbi, "Episodio di affermazione."

70 Cf. chap. 15, pp. 431–4.

Giorgio Adorno opposing those of Battista Montaldo, who was supported by the Guarco.⁷¹ The nobility—especially the Fieschi, Spinola and Doria, who possessed large swathes of land along the Rivas, in the Apennines, and in the Oltregiogo—took part in these riots according to their own interests, and their support was often decisive in view of their vast client networks throughout the region. Even the communities of the Rivas participated in these struggles, duplicating the internal divisions of the chief city: for example, the two main *partes* in Savona identified with the Doria-Campofregoso and Spinola-Adorno factions respectively.⁷² In particular, the Adorno established their power base in the Ponente: in Sestri, Pegli Varazze, Celle, Albisola, Spotorno, Noli, Porto Maurizio, and San Remo. At the same time, in the Levante, between Moneglia and the Val Bisagno, a new faction gathered around the Fieschi (whose territory extended from Montoggio to the high Val di Vara, almost reaching the region of Parma); the members of this *pars* were known as *gatteschi* from the cats depicted on their helmets.⁷³ The Campofregoso, for their part, forged matrimonial alliances with the dominant families of north-central Italy such as the Montefeltro of Urbino, extending their influence from the Lunigiana to Corsica.⁷⁴

Relations between Genoa's chief families and the lords of the Rivas had a strong influence on their choice of faction, equivalent to the policies of foreign rulers. This was already evident under Boucicaut, whose work in restructuring the city's legal framework gave birth to the Bank of San Giorgio, but who was bitterly unpopular for his support of both the Avignonese antipope Benedict XIII (the Aragonese Pedro de Luna, elected 1394), and Gabriele Maria Visconti's claim to the duchy of Milan.⁷⁵ Some of the Milanese governors between 1421 and 1435 were equally detested. Such is the case of Opizzino d'Alzate—a man who had abandoned his own humanity (*qui a se humanitatem abdicavit*), according to annalist Giorgio Stella⁷⁶—who ushered in a period of terror in the city through his indiscriminate use of capital punishment. During this period the interests of the Adorno, Campofregoso, Spinola

71 *CARG*, fol. 179r.

72 Musso, "Ceto dirigente."

73 On the Fieschi lordship: Giuliani, "Pontremoli"; Nasalli Rocca, "Borgo di Val di Taro"; Pavoni, "Fieschi."

74 Ivaldi, "Signoria dei Campofregoso"; Petti Balbi, "Episodio di affermazione."

75 Lévy, *Monarchie et commune*, 37–77. On the Bank of San Giorgio and for an analysis of its functions, see chap. 15, pp. 435–45.

76 *AG*, 359–61.

and Fieschi started to converge in opposition to Milanese rule: their forces surrounded Genoa but could not block the city from the sea.⁷⁷ Toward the mid-fifteenth century, when Genoa re-entered Milan's sphere of influence, several nobles began practicing piracy: such is the case of Benedetto Doria, lord of Dolceacqua, who together with other sea-captains made regular attacks against every Genoese ship they encountered.⁷⁸

Genoa's frequent subjections to foreign rulers—occupying sixty years of the fifteenth century—and regular violent returns to the dogeship exacerbated internal instability, fuelling the myth (or anti-myth) of Genoa's lack of a culture of governance, and of its inhabitants' strong individualism and pursuit of personal interest, by contrast with Florentine *libertas* or Venetian institutional stability. The situation may appear complex to an outside observer, for numerous reasons: first, the preeminence of economic concerns and their function as a source of conflict, combined with the inability of Genoa's political leaders to work together, resulted in phenomena like the city's subjection to foreign rulers or the alienation of many of the city's sovereign powers to an institution like the Bank of San Giorgio. Second, from the end of the fourteenth century certain families sought to assume an aristocratic lifestyle tied to self-assertion on the model of other cities in northern Italy, while the chief families of the nobility constructed vast domains in the Ligurian interior and along the Rivas, from which they attempted at a distance—by controlling tolls and internal communications routes—to manipulate civic politics in support of one party or another according to their own interests. Third, the city played a major role in broader Italian political debates—a subject poorly studied even today, especially for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—while certain prominent families occupying the dogeship regularly intervened in European and international politics, from which they could reframe political debates and influence choice of faction. Together, all of these complications render the political and institutional history of Genoa less than linear.

Even at the time, this state of confusion was deplored by numerous foreign observers. In the early years of the sixteenth century, for example, Francesco Guicciardini observed how Genoa was unlike “many other Italian cities which are afflicted by only one division, as the city is divided into many *partes*.” According to Guicciardini, this was because the “remains of the old conflicts between Guelfs and Ghibellines” were still present, as were hatred and resentment between nobles and *populares*, and especially between “Adorni and

77 In general, Basso, *Impero sul mare*, 243–61.

78 Ibid., 219–43.

Fregosi, who became the *cappellacci* (thus the Genoese call those who have risen to power) of the houses of the *populares*, and compete for the title of doge, which has for many years been held by one of them.”⁷⁹ Thus the repeated complaint by many chroniclers regarding the difficulty of following political developments in Genoa’s history: an intricate history, often considered self-referential and difficult to understand. A few years before Guicciardini, in fact, the Lunigianese Giovanni Antonio da Faie decided to set down his quill and surrender to the evidence: “I do not wish to write any further of the changes in Genoa, because it seems to me that they are so many and so complex that I doubt I could find all the paper I would need.”⁸⁰

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⁷⁹ Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, 2.654–5; on which, Pacini, “Tirannia delle fazioni,” 64–5.

⁸⁰ Giovanni Antonio da Faie, *Cronaca*, 592.

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Law and Society

Roberta Braccia

As in many other areas of Italy and Europe, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries witnessed sustained growth in the production of written laws in Genoa and Liguria. This was due to a favorable cultural environment characterized by an increase in the use of writing, a far-reaching phenomenon which involved both public documents—of which the *Libri iurium* are one of the most important manifestations—and private legal acts, which survive in the extremely rich contemporary notarial documentation.¹ In this climate, local customary law (the so-called *ius proprium*) was gradually channeled into a legislative environment marked by written tradition, although the customary dimension characterized by oral tradition was never fully abandoned.

In Genoa, as in other medieval communes, the writing of local laws led to the production of regulations that recorded variable content in different forms (for example, *statuta*, *brevia*, and *laudes*); this inexorable process eventually created an intricate “kaleidoscope” of sources. Nevertheless, among the various written sources of local law, the statute remained preeminent. This type of legislation maintained vitality throughout the premodern period, and was often capable of representing with near-precision the political, economic and social structures of a specific legal and institutional system. Insofar as statutes represent the paradigmatic expression of the communes’ legislative autonomy, it is no coincidence that their richness and versatility have attracted the interest of scholars from the nineteenth century onwards.²

In the case of the Genoese and Ligurian statutory tradition, the publication of the *Repertorio degli statuti della Liguria*³ at the beginning of the present century represents a true achievement in scholarship. It should be noted, however, that Piergiovanni’s now-classic text *Gli statuti civili e criminali di Genova nel medioevo* was published as early as 1980. Using up-to-date scientific principles, its author comprehensively addressed the statutory history of Genoa, an area

1 The civic annals must be considered among the most significant manifestations of this phenomenon. These diverse types of written documentation are all discussed in chap. 1 of this volume.

2 On the methodologies and objectives pursued by legal scholars with regard to statutes, see the survey by Pene Vidari, “Introduzione.”

3 *Repertorio degli statuti della Liguria* (RSL).

only partially explored by previous studies.⁴ This study—inexplicably ignored by medievalists in many disciplines—demonstrated the significance of the political and legal traditions of the urban communes against the broader backdrop of the Italian and European Middle Ages.⁵

The aforementioned *Repertorio* has considerably updated the previous outmoded and incomplete inventories of Genoese and Ligurian statutes; it was published after a ten-year-long collaborative project by scholars in numerous archives and libraries, coordinated by Rodolfo Savelli.⁶ The volume is equipped with an extensive introduction by the editor, which offers a comprehensive analysis of the Ligurian statutory sources with particular attention to Genoese statutory legislation.⁷ Much can be gained from this research, both from the conclusions it has put forward and from the avenues for future research it has identified. On the basis of quantitatively and qualitatively significant sources, for example, the study has proven the dissemination of the statutory law of Genoa (as the dominant city in the region) into the statutes of various communities under Genoese rule, in both the Levante and the Ponente.

This study has also suggested at least three potential avenues for future research: first, it implies that other sources—that is, other statutes of Ligurian cities and communities—could be found in the future. Second, the study demonstrates the necessity for the edition or re-edition of numerous sources. Third, the *Repertorio* will allow scholars to initiate fresh research on topics which have previously been explored only partially or not at all.⁸

4 Piergiovanni, *Statuti civili e criminali*. Piergiovanni has dealt extensively with a number of aspects of Genoese statutory law during his long career: see the studies collected in volume 1 of *Norme, scienza e pratica giuridica*.

5 Savelli ("Scrivere lo statuto," 10) has pointed out that works by Epstein (*W&W*, and *G&G*, especially 66–9), have failed to take advantage of these studies.

6 The *RSI* does not take into account regulations and statutes of single magistracies of both the city and the communities of Liguria; therefore, for example, the statutes of the offices of the *Mercanzia*, *Robaria*, and *Gazaria*, or the rules of the *Compere*, later the Casa di San Giorgio, have not been surveyed.

7 Savelli, "Scrivere lo statuto." Most of the information and reflections concerning Genoese statutory history presented in this chapter are taken from Savelli's study, which ought to be taken as a starting point on the subject, not least for its rich bibliography. Given the limited scope of this volume, I have tried to simplify the problems and themes—thoroughly addressed by Savelli—arising from the complexity of statutory sources. For a concise overview of Genoese statutory sources, see *GCMi*, 133–7.

8 This need is further prompted by at least two circumstances: some of the collections in the Genoese state archives lack finding aids—for example the *Senato*, in its various divisions, the *Magistrato delle comunità*, and the *Giunta dei confini*—and therefore they remain largely unexplored; likewise, only some of the numerous local archives have been surveyed.

The significance of the *Repertorio* of Ligurian statutes is mainly utilitarian, but we ought to mention one further implication. The study was conceived and begun during the last decades of the last century, a period that saw a flowering of research on this subject that resulted in numerous studies of statutes and editions of sources.⁹ During this phase, scholars at last shifted their attention towards the medieval and especially early modern statutes of minor centers such as small towns, villages, and castles (the so-called “rural” statutes). This historiographical trend contributed to the now widely-held conviction that the history of statutory law is not merely the history of the ancient urban statutes, but the history of local law in its entirety. The case of Liguria confirms that this affirmation is indeed correct, and presents a fairly detailed picture of the issues related to this type of source, setting the stage for fruitful comparison with other Italian and European cases.

This focus on the statutes of the smaller Ligurian centers has perhaps hindered scholars from working on critical editions of those Genoese statutes which are still unedited, or whose edition is in need of an update.¹⁰ Yet in spite of these shortcomings, it is generally agreed that the significance and richness of Genoese legal history have received due attention from scholars. The same cannot be said of the constitutional history of the city or the Ligurian “state.” In fact, many scholars have observed that Genoese constitutional history, with all its complexities and peculiarities, still occupies a fairly marginal position in the historiographical landscape.¹¹

The Earliest Traces of Statute Law in Genoa: The *Brevia*

The “earliest traces of statute law”¹² in Genoa date from the twelfth century, when the task of writing public documents belonged to the newly-established chancery, itself an important cornerstone of the city’s organizational structure.¹³ As in other communes, during this phase laws and local customs were

9 Braccia, “Dieci anni.”

10 Among the Genoese statutory sources, it seems likely that there will be no further “exceptional discoveries” regarding the medieval period: Savelli, “Presentazione,” in *RSL*, viii.

11 Savelli, “Scrivere lo statuto,” 10–11. On the constitutional system of the Genoese state during the *ancien régime*, see Savelli, “Diritto patrio.”

12 The term “traces of statute law” (*tracce statutarie*) is taken from a study by Ascheri: “Consuetudini e statuti,” 192. On the development of Genoese legislation during the Middle Ages, besides chap. 3 in this volume, see Piergiovanni’s synopsis in *Norme, scienza e pratica giuridica*, 1.439–46.

13 Rovere, “L’organizzazione burocratica.”

mainly written as *brevia* (oath texts), which later led naturally to the construction of statutes. Formally, the *brevia* were oath formulas registering the terms and aims of the city's magistrates in the exercise of their powers; as such they illuminate important aspects of Genoa's commercial, civic and criminal practices. Along with the *brevia*, the *laudes* also stand out in the Genoese "kaleidoscope" of legal sources. These were laws originating from occasional decisions of the urban magistrates which were then included in the *Libri iurium*, collections of pacts and contracts made by the Genoese commune with both private individuals and communities.¹⁴

The oldest *breve*—referred to in the sources as the "*breve* of the consuls of the pleas"—would have been promulgated sometime after 1130 by a typical magistracy of the primitive commune, namely the consuls of the pleas. We possess the text of only three *brevia*: the first dates to 1143, while the second and third are believed to date to 1157 and 1161.¹⁵ The 1143 text is longer and more complex than the 1157 and 1161 *brevia*, and has come to us through seventeenth- and eighteenth-century copies, fittingly (though inaccurately) titled "most ancient statutes" (*statuta vetustissima*).¹⁶ Of the laws contained in the *brevia*, some are based on custom, and others are not; they are chiefly directed towards the political, penal, and commercial spheres, with only occasional references to private law.

Regarding the political and institutional context of the *brevia*, we may say that they were written when the so-called "consular commune" had already achieved stability in Genoa.¹⁷ The consulate was a magistracy entrusted with the task of governing the commune; its name represented a clear reference to republican Rome, whose various elements were well-known thanks to the recovery of the legal tradition of the Roman empire. It is no coincidence that the vitality manifested by the urban Italian communes was contemporaneous with the establishment of numerous schools of law and the "rediscovery" of Justinianic law, a juxtaposition which allows us to affirm that the early communal period substantially coincided with the beginnings of the so-called "legal renaissance" of the Middle Ages.¹⁸ The "process of Romanization" influenced

14 On the *Libri iurium*, see the discussion and bibliography in chap. 1, pp. 39–42.

15 Recent studies have raised doubts and problems in dating these last two texts, underscoring the need for new critical editions: cf. Guglielmotti, "Statuti liguri," 3–4.

16 See the entries in *RSL* (nos. 403–17) for manuscripts and editions.

17 On this process, see chap. 4, pp. 99–103.

18 In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many jurists who came out of the newly established law schools occupied important institutional roles in the urban legal system, such as the posts of *podestà*, judge, and occasionally notary, thus placing at the disposal

not only the political and institutional structure of the commune, but also the language used in the *brevia*, which is noticeably evocative of Roman legal language. Nonetheless, the *brevia* also contain elements derived from the early medieval Germanic tradition, first and foremost frequent mentions—especially in the 1143 *breve*—to the institution and term *vindicta* (vendetta, or revenge).

Along with customary laws, therefore, the *brevia* articulated “new” laws specifying the duties and activities of the local magistrates, as an expression of the political will of the city’s ruling elite (whose precise composition, however, is difficult to determine). These laws suggest the existence of a legal sphere that was dynamic and common to all inhabitants, be they mere *habitatores* (inhabitants) or proper citizens (*cives*); moreover, this sphere was characterized by the circulation of laws and customs based on the principle of the territoriality of law.¹⁹ In other words, despite a diversity of social classes and legal categories, perhaps from its very origins communal law was considered to apply to both citizens and non-citizens—even though the latter, while inhabitants of the city, did not hold the rights generally associated with citizenship, for example the right to participate in assemblies, to approve laws and swear the *brevia*, or to elect and be elected into official posts.

The Birth of a Statutory System: *Capitula* and *Regulae*

If we compare the three extant *brevia* with laws dating from the period around 1200, we can see several changes in both form and content. The use of a more mature writing style accompanied the gradual though not complete abandonment of the *breve* form; at the same time, the laws began to be referred to as *capitula* (articles) due to their fusion and re-elaboration into a more or less unitary body.

These considerations are the result of the laborious analysis of brief fragments and textual citations, since the condition of the Genoese statutory sources for the thirteenth century is extremely poor and riddled with holes. For example, thus far we lack any direct attestation of the first drafting of a Genoese statute. It is certain, however, that in 1221 a text of this kind was modified by a papal envoy who wanted to expunge certain laws that threatened the

of the community a wealth of technical concepts that are often clearly visible in the legal sources of those systems, i.e. the urban statutes.

19 Questions regarding the rights and responsibilities of citizenship became more fraught as the Genoese established communities beyond Genoa and Liguria: see chaps. 8, pp. 211–14, 17, pp. 478–9, and 18, p. 498. On Ligurian immigrants in Genoa: chap. 7, pp. 181–4.

fiscal and legal immunity of ecclesiastics.²⁰ It is also certain that extant legislation was reorganized by Jacopo Baldovini (Balduino), a well-known glossator who taught at the university in Bologna, when he was called to Genoa in 1229 to act as *podestà*, a magistracy which had been established in 1190.²¹

From a cultural and political point of view, this last event was a very important moment: Genoa was one of the first communes to entrust the management of public affairs to a doctor of law. The early presence of jurists in the Ligurian commune signals a trend which can also be detected elsewhere; during the phase of podestarial government in the medieval commune, the administration of justice was increasingly performed and legitimated by legal professionals.

According to the annals, in 1229 Jacopo Baldovini reformed and reorganized a large part of the Genoese local law, an effort which resulted in a new compilation of *capitula*.²² Unfortunately, the state of the extant sources, which are limited to a few fragments, prevents us from appreciating the statutory reforms made by the Bolognese jurist. There is no doubt, however, that he reorganized the thirteenth-century statutes by rearranging them into “books” of laws—one of which concerned commercial law, a Genoese peculiarity.²³

It is also certain that other collections and types of statutes began to circulate from the thirteenth century onward. Many hypotheses have been advanced regarding the contents and length of these statutes. The legislation concerning the commune, the *compagna*, and the *popolo* seems to have been included in a “large volume” of *capitula* (*magnum volumen capitulorum*) formally divided into eight books, of which only a few traces remain.²⁴ Moreover, it is significant that later sources attest the simultaneous presence of another, smaller, legislative collection, called the *volumen parvum* (“small volume”), which included both civil and criminal law.²⁵

If the thirteenth-century Genoese statutory landscape can be interpreted and evaluated only through a few fragments and rough hypotheses, the same

20 At the present state of research, the only Ligurian commune for which we possess the earliest text of a statute is Savona: Calleri, “Più antichi statuti.” The Savonese statute was written before 1230 by extracting different laws from communal registers and from earlier texts in the form of *brevia*, of which no trace has survived.

21 On these events, cf. Sarti, “Jacopo Balduino.”

22 AGC for 1229, 3.45. Baldovini played also a leading role in the renewal of the *Libri iurium*: Rovere, “I Libri iurium,” 196.

23 Cf. Piergiovanni, *Statuti civili e criminali*, 20–26.

24 The *volumen magnum* in force in 1297–9 was divided into at least eight books; later, more legislative material was added (perhaps dating to 1306–7), and a new version had already been completed by 1323.

25 We only know of the existence of the *volumen parvum*.

cannot be said of the fourteenth century. A partial but nonetheless direct study of fourteenth-century Genoese law is possible thanks to the survival of the Genoese statutes of 1316–18. For this source, whose origins were rooted in the previous century, we have not only multiple manuscript sources but also an edition, namely the so-called *Statutes of Pera* from the Genoese colony of Pera-Galata at Constantinople (see figs. 82–3).²⁶ This text is divided into six books, the first five of which are the Genoese statutes proper, while the last contains specific laws for the administration of the colony, most likely created by local magistrates. Despite numerous problems in dating the source and its multi-layered text, and despite their incomplete state, therefore, the first five books lay out the *capitula communis Ianue* (articles of the Genoese commune). The contents of the first book are largely heterogeneous; the second concerns procedural law; the third, family law and rights of succession; the fourth considers criminal law while the fifth concerns commercial law.

During the fourteenth century, Genoese statutory law developed further, with innovations that are both interesting and original by comparison to other communal and signorial administrations, especially with regard to the sections of local law by which the politics and administration of the city were organized. Towards the mid-fourteenth century, between Simone Boccanegra's first *dogato* and the first Visconti *signoria*, a new type of statute took shape, which was paired with the *volumen magnum* and the *volumen parvum*: these were the *regulae*.²⁷ This type of legislation included statutes concerning the commune's constitutional apparatus, namely the laws regarding the structure and functions of some of the city's magistracies and the laws aimed at regulating the relationships between different social strata (the nobility and *popolo*).

The first extant compilation of *regulae* dates to the second half of the fourteenth century, more precisely to 1363, and coincides with the *dogato* of Gabriele Adorno.²⁸ The legislation in question is interesting both in view of the type of organization it specified, and because of the legal culture it expressed. The legal culture, in particular, was permeated by the principles of Roman law and canon law (*ius commune*).²⁹ The preface contains a direct reference to

26 *Statuti di Genova* (1316). The manuscripts used for this edition are preserved respectively in the Biblioteca Universitaria, Genoa, and in the Biblioteca Reale, Turin (cfr. *RSL*, no. 421).

27 Piergiovanni, *Statuti civili e criminali*, 87–99; Savelli, "Scrivere lo statuto," 33–65.

28 Only an incomplete manuscript of this text has survived, preserved in the Archivio storico del comune di Genova; an edition of the text was published in the *Leges Genuenses*.

29 *Ius commune* is based on Roman and canon law, and should not be confused with "common law": "the English common law is so called because it was common to all of England, in contrast to local customs. The *ius commune* [in Europe] is so called because it was common to all scholars": van Caenegem, *European Law*, 13–14.

canon law since it presents two quotations from Gratian's *Decretum*, a work written around the mid-twelfth century and a cornerstone of the Roman church's legislative apparatus. The same preface establishes that the *regulae* were to be published *more legum* (in the manner of the laws), a clear reference to a well-known passage in Justinian's *Codex* that shows the desire or presumption of the author of the statute to compare his humble activity to the emperor's.³⁰ It must be said that the contents of the *regulae* do not offer a comprehensive framework for Genoa's entire system of magistracies, since many of these possessed their own rules and regulations (for example, the *Ufficio di Gazaria*, in charge of shipping and the eastern colonies, or the *Ufficio di Mercanzia*, in charge of trade).

One of the most significant pages in Genoese statutory history was written a few years later in 1375, when doge Domenico Campofregoso appointed a commission of "reformers" to prepare a new *volumen parvum* of *capitula*. In response to the doge's mandate, a new version of civil and criminal statutes was compiled, two manuscripts of which are preserved in the Genoese state archives and deserve to be published in a critical edition. The most noteworthy innovation introduced by the statute writers of 1375 is undoubtedly their rationalization of the format of the laws: the formula of the *breve*, which was still in use in the previous set of statutes, was at this time permanently eliminated. Beyond that, the most obvious change in their contents is the "disappearance" of commercial law, an omission that represented a deliberate choice on the part of the reformers, who thought it more appropriate to include such material in a new *volumen magnum* dedicated to political laws.³¹ In fact, this operation was completed later; the *volumen magnum* was only written in 1403 under French rule, during the government of lieutenant Jean Le Meingre (Boucicaut). It was a complex work, begun in 1400 and entrusted to a commission whose most prominent member was the jurist Giacomo di Campofregoso, who was very active in Genoese political and institutional life.³²

During Giorgio Adorno's *dogato* in 1413, following a change in government and the end of French rule, the problem of the city's statutory legislation had to be dealt with once again, and therefore new compilations, one of *capitula* and another of *regulae*, were prepared. The compilation of the *regulae* was entrusted to a commission led by jurist Leonardo Cattaneo, who made extensive

30 Savelli, "Scrivere lo statuto," 41–2.

31 Piergiovanni (*Statuti civili e criminali*, 129–37) provides a comprehensive analysis of the contents of the 1375 statutes.

32 A careless edition of the text, based on the only and incomplete extant manuscript preserved at the Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères in Paris, was published in the *Leges Genuenses*.

use of the 1363 collection, adapting it to the political and institutional needs of the time. Likewise, Damiano Pallavicino, a legal expert like Cattaneo, was named as head of the commission charged with reforming the *capitula*. The continued coexistence of two autonomous and separate bodies of laws—*capitula* and *regulae*—was a peculiar and emblematic element of medieval statutory history, which became the foundation for the imposing legal system built by Genoa in the period that followed.

Evolution of a System: *Reformationes*, *Leges novae*, *Statuta civilia* and *criminalia*

The structure of the Genoese statutory system as it had developed between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries remained essentially unchanged in the subsequent period, especially the parts concerning civil and criminal legislation. Nonetheless, the evolution of the Genoese regional state that gave rise to the Republic in 1528 required a few significant changes strictly related to the *regulae*.

Even after the reforms of 1413, it was still periodically necessary to make corrections and additions to legislative texts. This need was manifested both within and outside the institutional sphere. For instance, the first printed edition of the Genoese statutes, promoted by Antonio Maria Visdomini, a scholar from the Lunigiana, was published in 1498 with the clear intent of making the statutes better known.³³ This “private” edition of the city’s statutes, printed in Bologna, was poorly executed from both textual and structural points of view, and although the printed text is not much different from the manuscript copies circulating at the time, it nonetheless demonstrates an important and far-reaching cultural change in the ways in which “law” was conceptualized and used—namely, that it was not only necessary to preserve law, but also to make it easily available and usable.

New “constitutional laws” were promulgated during the sixteenth century: the well-known *Reformationes* (1528) and the *Leges novae* (1576).³⁴ These laws

33 *Statuta et decreta* (Bologna, 1498). On the fifteenth-century Genoese statutes and for a comparison with previous statutes, see Piergiovanni, *Statuti civili e criminali*, 58–242; on the problems which emerge from the Bolognese edition see also Savelli, “*Capitula, regulae e pratiche*,” 496–8.

34 On the Genoese constitutional system see also Ferrante, *Difesa*. On the 1528 constitutional reform cf. Pacini, *Presupposti politici*; on the process of elaboration of the *Leges Novae*: Savelli, *Repubblica oligarchica*.

were different from the previous ones both lexically and structurally, and were clearly aimed at defending the legality of the republican regime established by Andrea Doria in 1528. From this point of view, it has been noted that Genoese history presents certain peculiarities when compared to other states of the time such as Florence and Venice: in Genoa the constitution was written, through the *regulae* or *leges*. Moreover, it was not framed as single provisions, but as distinct and fairly organic bodies of statutes: collections of written laws, periodically arranged, aimed at regulating Genoese political life. The administrative and judicial reforms encouraged by the 1528 laws also made necessary the reform of criminal and civil laws. This process was conducted on two different levels: the reformed criminal statutes were promulgated in 1556 and published in 1557, while the civil statutes were published in Genoa in 1589.³⁵ The *capitula civilia* and *criminalia*, which until that moment had circulated as a single *corpus*, were divided into two different groups and joined to another body of laws—the aforementioned *Leges novae* of 1576—in this last major modification to the republic's constitutional system.

Interestingly, laws regarding commercial matters, which had been excluded from the statutes of 1375 and 1413, were reintroduced in the city's last set of civil statutes. These statutes remained in force until the eighteenth century not only in principle but also in practice, as shown by the numerous editions (sixteen in 120 years), and by their ample use in jurisprudence and doctrine until the end of the eighteenth century. By contrast, the criminal statutes of 1556, aside from being edited several times, were “updated” at several different moments from 1616 to 1669–71. In other words, the sixteenth-century criminal statutes were different from the civil statutes, which were no longer being modified and ultimately became fossilized, a phenomenon also visible in other jurisdictions.

This brief outline of legal developments in medieval Genoa suggests one final reflection. With traditions rooted in the early communal phase, and the development of a complex system that reached full maturity in the sixteenth century, the centuries-old Genoese statutory tradition came formally to an end in the last years of the eighteenth century. During its “lingering decline” (1600–1700), institutions and practices were influenced by continuous political, social and economic change, but the statutory system remained the same. Thus premodern Genoese society, principles, and practices can be fully understood only by rediscovering and analyzing the Genoese legal experience in

35 The most recent study of statutory tradition and the administration of justice in criminal matters have been made by Ferrante in “Giustizia criminale,” which contains an ample survey of the bibliography on and sources for this subject (386–91).

its entirety, irrespective of traditional—and at times overly abused—historical periodizations.³⁶

Genoese Society through its Statutes: Aspects of Family Law and Rights of Succession

Given medieval Genoa's chiefly mercantile focus, scholars have most often concentrated their attention on the figure of the merchant, the commercial activities of its citizens, and the consequences of those activities. An alternative reading of Genoese society, however, can be pursued from a different perspective—namely, a reflection on the legal position of women, whose rights and responsibilities were often spelled out in local legislation and other sources of custom or practice.³⁷

Like other sets of urban statutes, Genoese statutory legislation dealt with numerous aspects of private law even if it refrained from offering exhaustive regulations. Among these, the family (understood as a partnership founded on marriage) held an important role. The attention of medieval legislators in this regard generally translated into the formalization of a number of local customs, and only rarely in the imposition of original solutions with respect to *ius commune*. In general, the different versions of the Genoese statutes confirm that legislators relied upon rules and practices common in similar political and institutional contexts. Therefore, in Genoa and its dominions, the dowry system not only enforced on spouses a regime of separate ownership of assets, but also had clear implications for succession rights, because it presupposed the exclusion of daughters who had received a dowry from legitimate succession to the advantage of sons. As is well-known, the policies for the preservation and increase of family assets that are typical of Italian and European pre-industrial societies were based on this system.³⁸

36 Periodization in history is a necessity, but it is never a neutral or innocent act, as Le Goff has pointed out (*Découper l'histoire*).

37 On family law and the legal status of women, see also the discussion in chap. 7, pp. 179–81.

38 The bibliography on this theme is nearly endless, as demonstrated by Kirshner, *Marriage, Dowry and Citizenship*. For a first approach see Skinner's synopsis in *Women*; however, the study by Romano (*Famiglia*) is still useful. See also the following collected volumes: Bonfield, *Marriage, Property and Succession*; Schutte/Kuehn/Seidel Menchi, *Time, Space, and Women's Lives*; Chabot/Hayez/Lett, *La famille*; and the recent Di Renzo Villata, *Family Law*.

Genoese statutory law specifically regulated the patrimonial relationship between spouses through laws dedicated to the establishment and restitution of dowries, widowhood allowances (dower), alimony, and succession rights of the surviving spouse and the offspring.³⁹ Moreover, like many other urban statutes, Genoese legislation not only regulated the patrimonial effects of the marriage's end following the death of one of the spouses, but also of a separation between spouses.⁴⁰ However, since statutory sources were designed to work within a larger system, they give only a partial view of a very complex framework whose specificities must be sought elsewhere. In other words, in order to understand the patrimonial rules on which the Genoese family was based, it is necessary to evaluate both notarial practice and the tenets of the *ius commune* (Roman and canon law). Similarly, it is important to examine the legal status of women, which generally differed from place to place and according to the social standing of the woman in question.

Regarding the legal status of women: if, formally, the choices of Genoese legislators seem to have complied in many respects with general trends that were "unfavorable" to women, practice shows that local law never prevented Genoese women from participating in contracts with a certain level of freedom and independence. In fact, they were significantly involved in various commercial endeavors as investors, as sleeping partners in *commenda* contracts, or as creditors in sea loan contracts.⁴¹ Similarly, recent studies of succession rights and testamentary practices have shown that Genoese women often had more autonomy than that expressed or codified in statutory laws or the *ius commune*.⁴²

39 There are very few studies on patrimonial relationships between spouses in the legal tradition of late medieval Genoa. This is all the more evident when compared to the extraordinary volume of studies dealing with the Venetian and Florentine cases. There is one analysis limited to the early centuries of the commune: Forcheri, "Rapporti patrimoniali." On the specific theme of widowhood allowances (covering the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries) see Braccia, "*Uxor gaudet*." Genoese laws of succession also deserve further study, as Chabot has also observed in *Dette des familles*, 33n62. The now outdated study by Niccolai, *Formazione del diritto*, should certainly be updated (and before that time, used with caution).

40 On the Genoese legal tradition in matters regarding marriage separation cf. Braccia, "Mogli in fuga."

41 This is evident from the notarial contracts examined by Angelos, "Women in *Commenda* Contracts." On this theme see Petti Balbi/Guglielmotti, *Dare credito alle donne*.

42 See Petti Balbi, "*Donna et domina*," whose conclusions agree with those put forward by Hughes, "Urban Growth."

While the legal status of women is a privileged point of view for gauging the structure and dynamics of a given society, it is at the same time much too complex to be thoroughly explained in a few pages. For this reason, I will concentrate here on a specific institution in Genoese family law, the *antefactum*, which engaged urban legislators both earlier and more consistently than other legal institutions. The *antefactum*, one of the many types of marriage allowances practiced in medieval and early modern Europe, was in short the patrimonial commitment of the groom and his natal family with regard to the dowered bride.⁴³ The precocious interest of Genoese legislators in this institution is shown in the contents of a *laus* of the consuls of the pleas dated 1130, an extremely interesting document from which it can be inferred that when Genoese women married, they were subject to either of two different “patrimonial systems”: some married “according to custom” (*secundum usum et consuetudinem*), while others married “according to law” (*secundum legem*).⁴⁴ While the former were granted two distinct contributions by their husbands, the *antefactum* and the *tercia*, the women married according to law were given only the *antefactum*.⁴⁵ The *tercia*, a custom of Frankish origin (similar to the Lombard *quarta*), entitled a widow to a third of her deceased husband’s belongings. Moreover, even during the marriage it gave the wife real rights to her husband’s wealth, leading to a sort of partial joint-property regime.⁴⁶ Women married “according to custom” had far more patrimonial rights than women married “according to law.” This distinction was eliminated through a legal provision dated 1143 through which the consuls abolished the *tercia*, leaving brides only the right to receive the *antefactum*, whose value was

43 Especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, marriage allowances were widespread in Italy and Europe under different names which varied from place to place like *dotario* (Sicily and Puglia), *escreix* (Sardinia), *antefato* or *antiferna* (the kingdom of Naples), *arrhae* (Castile), *screix* or *sponsalitium* (Catalonia), *douaire* (the French region), *aumento dotale* (Piedmont), *quarto* (Rome), *contradote* or *incontro* (Veneto). Traces of these allowances have also been identified for the early Middle Ages: Bougard et al., *Dots et douaires*.

44 *LI* 1.1, doc. 138.

45 Genoese legislators only addressed patrimonial rights connected to betrothals and marriages (*sponsalia*), which for centuries remained an institution regulated by canon law and subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. On ecclesiastical interventions in unions and marriage dissolution in Liguria between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries, see Polonio, “Consentirono.” There are no specific studies of this topic in later centuries. For an accurate depiction of Genoese marriage customs during the fifteenth century see Pandiani, *Vita privata*, 193–200.

46 Vismara, “Rapporti patrimoniali,” especially 124ff.

not allowed to exceed 100 lire.⁴⁷ This event, which must have affected many Genoese women, is reported in Caffaro's annals, where a well-known illustration depicts two women extending large and visibly empty hands as if in despair.⁴⁸

The abolition of the *tercia* by the Genoese legislators, with the intent of reducing the patrimonial rights of brides and widows, is emblematic of an attitude then widespread in northern Italy which led local legislators to abolish the "advantageous" customary marriage allowances of Germanic origin, such as the Frankish *tertia* and the Lombard *quarta*.⁴⁹ This happened in Pisa as early as 1141, when urban legislators abolished the *quarta* with a law that represents the direct precedent for the general antipathy towards marriage allowances of Germanic origin. Moreover, as in Genoa, following the abolition of the *quarta*, the extant marriage allowance (*antefactum*) became a mere widowhood allowance, or dower.⁵⁰

The need to curb in one way or another the claims and ambitions of wives with respect to their husbands' wealth derived from the coexistence of different allowances derived from different legal traditions—Roman, Lombard, and Frankish, among others. Those traditions that granted more rights to wives over their husbands' assets damaged the interests of the latter and their families. If we shift our attention from local law to the *ius commune*, it is clearly no coincidence that the pronouncements of the jurists were aimed at demonstrating that all marriage allowances should be merged into a single allowance as conceived by the Roman legal tradition, the *donatio propter nuptias*: an assimilation both formal and substantive that supported the principle of reducing the number of allowances and the patrimonial rights of women.⁵¹ This trend can also be seen in Genoa, where during the twelfth century urbanized aristocratic families began to adopt a patrilinear system with principles of succession that

47 LI 1.1, doc. 64, *laus de terciis ablatis mulieribus* (106–7). There are also hints of the *antefactum* in the 1143 *breve*: *De scriptura facta ante matrimonium et de tercia et de antefacto ita faciemus sicut determinate scriptum est in brevi consulum placitorum*. On the 1143 provision, and on the *tercia* and *antefactum* in twelfth-century Genoa, see Hughes, "Urban Growth," 13–15, and "Domestic Ideals."

48 AGC for 1143, 1.31. On the image: Bellomo, *Condizione giuridica*, 38. On the annals, see chap. 1, pp. 37–9.

49 On the *odium tertiae* and *quartae*, and in general, cf. Bellomo, *Ricerche*, 1–25.

50 Storti, *Costituti pisani*, 72–4.

51 This explanation is accepted by Kreutz ("Twilight of Morgengabe").

were more favorable to men than to women.⁵² The abolition of the *tercia* in Genoa, therefore, was probably inspired by the political necessities of reorganizing and reinforcing the patrimonial base of the aristocratic family.⁵³

To understand the nature, content, and function of the *antefactum* as established by law, the few legislative sources at our disposal are insufficient. While the 1143 *breve* mentions the *antefactum*, confirming legislators' interest in the subject, most of the useful information comes from twelfth- and early thirteenth-century notarial deeds concerning marriage practices. These reveal that in the majority of cases the *antefactum* was a variable sum of money which a wife could claim from her husband's assets upon the dissolution of a marriage (*solutio matrimonii*).⁵⁴ It does not seem that a widower possessed a similar right to part of his wife's dowry, which was therefore returned whole to her natal family.

Many years ago, Diane Owen Hughes conducted a study of thirteenth-century Genoese marriage contracts according to a somewhat different perspective, more attentive to the sociological than the legal dimension of marriage.⁵⁵ In the material she analyzed, Hughes noticed a profound difference between marriage contracts stipulated by aristocrats and those stipulated by artisans: during the thirteenth century, almost all of the agreements made between aristocrats complied with the spirit of the 1143 law, drastically reducing the value of the *antefactum*, while artisans continued to grant their wives copious *antefacta* according to their resources—in these cases the values of dowry and *antefactum* were almost equal. This generosity seems to have been due to the structure of the artisan family and the conditions of artisan marriages. Often, in fact, the joint contributions agreed upon at the beginning of marriage (dowry and *antefactum*) were intended to support a joint business initiative: on this basis, the activities of wool workers during the thirteenth century were almost all initiatives involving both husband and wife, with equal importance placed on the wives' working activities. The "entrepreneurial" role of the artisan wife

52 This emerges from testamentary practices: Hughes, "Struttura familiare," 936ff. Hughes draws her conclusions from an analysis of numerous twelfth- and thirteenth-century notarial deeds.

53 The prohibition on giving women the allowance customary in Frankish tradition facilitated the affirmation of power by the families of the governing aristocracy, who actively participated in the political life of the commune; Bellomo, *Ricerche*, 24.

54 Braccia, "*Uxor gaudet*," 88. The wife was entitled to the *antefactum* even in case of divorce.

55 Hughes, "Struttura familiare," 950n44. The studies by Hughes on the family structure of Genoese artisans have been recently reconsidered, extended, and developed by Bezzina, *Artigiani a Genova*. See also the forthcoming Guglielmotti, "Women, Families, and Wealth."

could therefore justify the increase of the *antefactum* that is evident, at least for a period of time, in marriage contracts. By contrast, as suggested earlier, the aristocracy from a very early period attempted to reduce the marriage allowance for widows in order to preserve family assets.⁵⁶

If the first legal references to the *antefactum* are rather brief, the same cannot be said of the first extant compilation of Genoese statutes, which allowed ample space to rights of succession and devoted an entire chapter to the *antefactum*.⁵⁷ While allowing the possibility of different arrangements (an *antefactum* by agreement), the statute guaranteed that in the absence of a specific stipulation the dowered widow would obtain as *antefactum* a portion of her husband's assets equal to the value of her dowry (an *antefactum* by law). The statutes also established the principle of the allowance's reciprocity, in which the surviving spouse could withhold a part of the assets of the deceased spouse—so a widow would receive the *antefactum* while a widower would retain part of his wife's dowry of the same value.⁵⁸ The laws established that, in the absence of a specific agreement to the contrary, the *antefactum* was to be equal to the dowry provided that the dowry did not exceed one hundred lire.

The *antefactum* plays a second major role in a statutory provision aimed at discouraging wives from deserting the marital home. The law in question, which was retained almost unchanged in subsequent statutes, established that a wife's unjustified desertion should be punished with the loss of her dowry and *antefactum*. This punishment could only be inflicted under specific conditions such as the wife's cohabitation with individuals who were not members of her family or cohabitation with relatives against the will of her husband.⁵⁹ It seems evident that this provision was aimed at safeguarding family cohesion, a paramount value in preindustrial societies.

Genoese statutory law regarding the *antefactum* was modified again with the 1375 statutes, which largely agreed with the subsequent statutes of 1413. The

56 A classic example of the attitude adopted over time by the aristocracy with regard to the *antefactum* is the case of Marietta, a noblewoman and widow of Antonio Maria Serra, who in 1398 obtained only 100 lire as *antefactum* in addition to the reimbursement of her own dowry, valued at 1000 lire: Podestà, "I Serra," 38–9.

57 *Statuti di Genova* (1316), 3.131.

58 *Statuti di Genova* (1316), 3.128.

59 *Statuti di Genova* (1316), 3.134. This law also appears in the last set of city statutes (promulgated in 1588): *Statutorum Civilium* (Genoa, 1589) 5.10: *De uxore fugitiva de domo mariti*. Conversely, a woman who was able to prove to the judge that her desertion was due to specific reasons spelled out in the urban statute was not to be punished. For example, a wife's desertion was considered justified in case of her husband's "madness," or following serious abuse or death threats.

greatest change was represented by the reduction of the legal *antefactum* to which a widow was entitled: the statutes established its value at half the dowry, while before it had to be equal.⁶⁰ Although the value of the *antefactum* was halved, the rights acquired by the wife on the basis of agreement between the parties (conventional *antefactum*) were nonetheless maintained. This single law aimed indiscriminately at both spouses thus confirmed the rule of reciprocity in such allowances; it further specified that in questions of succession sons would take precedence over daughters. Finally, the statutes provided for the *antefactum* to be granted only in cases where the wife remained in her husband's home and continued to live a married life (*in habitu matrimonii*): this apparently odd additional clarification reminds us that marriages were often "negotiated" considerably before the beginning of married life.

Finally, even later statutory legislation—that is, the civil statutes of 1589 still in force in the eighteenth century—dedicated a *capitulum* to the *antefactum*: it confirmed these rules, which by then had been consolidated from both legal and practical standpoints, in a new and formalized manner.⁶¹ The only departure from the previous legislative tradition was a parenthesis highlighting how urban widows were granted a different allowance for the purchase of mourning garments from non-urban widows (those residing in the Genoese dominion): in both cases the cost would be borne by their husband's estate, but urban widows were allowed to spend five times as much as non-urban widows. We can connect this to another curious fact: a comprehensive analysis of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century statutory legislation of the Ligurian Ponente has brought to light that its prevailing practice—contrary to the spirit of Genoese legislation—was not to grant any allowance at all to widows; in fact, the statutes of the Ligurian rural centers generally ignored, and at times even expressly prohibited, the *antefactum*.⁶²

Clearly the significance of this difference is not the variety of local customs *per se*, but rather the circumstances and reasoning which led various legislators, even those in Genoa, to choose opposing solutions. It seems that in Genoa and in the Genoese *districtus* women (or many of them) were more "free," that is, relatively secure and protected compared to those who resided in the rest of the Genoese dominion, who were less "autonomous" and poorer than Genoese women, but no different from the majority of the women of the time. In fact,

60 *Statuta et decreta* 3.4: *Uxore defoncta quantum lucretur maritus ex dotibus vel e contra et de antefacto presumendo*.

61 *Statutorum Civilium* 9: *De antefacto*.

62 For the sources and results of this comparison, Braccia, "Uxor gaudet," 106–12.

it is common knowledge that throughout most of northern Italy women suffered severe reductions of their patrimonial rights in this period, including the almost complete abolition of marital allowances.

Despite the official existence of a “Genoese statutory umbrella” over the territories of the Genoese dominion, the process of the homogenization of statutory law in Liguria was complicated by the specific solutions devised by different local legal traditions. This is demonstrated by the disparity between the laws established by Genoese statutes, which were favorable to the *antefactum*, and those established by individual local statutes, which were not.

When evaluated through the lens of statutory law and practice regarding the *antefactum*, therefore, medieval Genoa emerges as a society where women were able to exercise greater control over assets compared to elsewhere. The practices related to the *antefactum* confirm first that in Genoa many women were able to manage considerable assets more or less freely, and second, that while employed in numerous and varied trades, they also managed to act more or less autonomously in commercial and professional matters. The reasons for this are surely to be found in the complex history of medieval Genoa, a city that operated both commercially and politically on a Mediterranean scale. The hypotheses advanced here, however, require further verification based on systematic studies and details in the available sources which are so far largely unexplored. If it is true that the rich Genoese statutory tradition is now fairly well outlined in its essentials, much work still remains to be done on usage and practice—in particular, among the abundant notarial documentation.⁶³

We may expect a landscape enriched with new subtleties and details, the basis of which remains the Genoese and Ligurian family. It was founded and built on the same principles that determined the structure of the European family between the Middle Ages and the modern age: the fundamental role of the *paterfamilias* (and the head of the family); the adoption of principles designed to preserve family assets (such as the dowry system or inheritance laws favoring the male line); and the relatively restricted legal space occupied by women both in the family and in society at large as daughters, mothers, wives and widows.

63 Valuable new perspectives and avenues of research are advanced by Guglielmotti, “Women, Families, and Wealth.”

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Social Landscapes

Denise Bezzina

Like many other cities Genoa was the scene of vigorous social interaction during the Middle Ages. The extant documentation, consisting of hundreds of thousands of private records dating from the mid-twelfth century onward, offers a privileged point of view for an analysis of these relationships. Given that the few extant sources for the preceding centuries do not provide enough information to trace a cogent picture of Genoese society, the chapter will focus on the period spanning the twelfth to fifteenth centuries. Another premise is necessary: in discussing medieval Genoa we also must acknowledge certain historiographical disadvantages. If the twelfth, thirteenth and (to a certain extent) fifteenth centuries are covered by various studies which have elucidated many aspects of the city's political, social and economic life, the fourteenth century has yet to be investigated. The main reason for this shortcoming is the absence of a contemporary chronicle of the city—the only evidence to rely on for the period being the *Annals* written by Giorgio Stella at the end of the fourteenth century, which recount facts which the author had not witnessed in person¹—as well as the loss of documents produced by the commune.² Without the civic annals and (for the early decades of the fourteenth century) public documents as a guide, any scholar delving into the fourteenth century must come to terms with the multitude of unedited notarial registers.

The study of medieval Genoese society has been heavily influenced by this peculiar documentary landscape, as well as by scholars' proclivity to focus on economic issues.³ The centrality of commerce—seen as the driving force behind the city's economic growth—and therefore of the merchant, has captured the attention of scholars, who have generally tended to focus their attention entirely on this segment of society, and mostly on the economic aspects of the city and its expansionist policies in the Mediterranean. Within the body of work on medieval Genoa, therefore, Diane Owen Hughes' groundbreaking studies on Genoese society during the central Middle Ages stand as a striking exception, particularly her efforts to investigate the social stratification of the

1 Stella, *Annales genuenses* (AG).

2 On Giorgio Stella and the civic annalists as sources, see the discussion in chap. 1, pp. 37–9.

3 See the discussions in the Introduction (pp. 7–8) and chap. 14 (pp. 397–9).

city, its family structures, and the inclinations of the city's most visible social actors.⁴ While these studies dealt mostly with the aristocracy, Hughes also considered the city's artisans, being one of the first scholars to pay attention to the subaltern strata of Genoese society.⁵ When it comes to the later Middle Ages, however, numerous questions have remained unanswered. To date, only Giovanna Petti Balbi's study of Simone Boccanegra's dogeships, which concentrates on the period of 1339–63, has tried to capture a picture of the complex social landscape of the fourteenth century.⁶ Moreover, particularly with regard to the creation and development of the *alberghi*—family consortia which became the linchpin of the city's social structure during the fourteenth century, which we shall discuss briefly here—our knowledge is still based on Edoardo Grendi's preliminary studies, which mainly deal with the fifteenth century.⁷ At the present state of research, therefore, these lacunae hinder us from grasping not only the city's political vicissitudes, but also the most salient traits of the development of its social fabric.

A Note on the Composition of Genoese Society

In order to define the composition of Genoa's urban society, it is necessary to begin with its demographic fluctuations. The staggering demographic growth experienced by the city was of fundamental importance in contributing to the

4 Hughes, "Domestic Ideals"; "Kinsmen and Neighbors"; "Urban Growth." Other insights emerge from Epstein's study of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Genoese wills (w&w). The twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been recently covered by two studies investigating respectively aristocratic families and artisan groups: Luca Filangieri's still unpublished dissertation, *Famiglie e gruppi*, and Bezzina, *Artigiani*.

5 An in-depth analysis of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century apprenticeship deeds carried out by a group of scholars of the Università di Genova in the early 1980s resulted in a series of studies that sketch the profile of late medieval Genoese artisan groups: Casarino et al., *Giovani*. On artisans and labor, see also Epstein's works "Labour" and *Wage Labor*, the latter of which is partly based on Genoese notarial records.

6 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 137–292; see also her synthesis, "Tra dogato e principato."

7 Grendi, "Profilo storico" and "Problemi di storia." Other studies of the fifteenth century have failed to give these issues due consideration: Heers' *Clan familial* has been harshly criticized; also, by the same author and specifically on the fifteenth century, Gxv. Kamenaga's *Chusei Jenova*, which addresses the topic, is only available in Japanese, but the same author considers the problem of surnames and *alberghi* in "Changing to a New Surname." Finally, a recent study by Paola Guglielmotti (*Agnacio seu parentella*) reconstructs the family dynamics of the *albergo* Squarciafico, one of the earliest *alberghi* attested in Genoa.

creation of a diverse social landscape, since the vibrant social interactions illustrated by notarial deeds sprang at least in part from immigration. Numerous scholars have attempted to estimate the size of Genoa's urban population and its growth rate. Of course, there are no clear indications as to the precise size of the population, given that the city's population fluctuated broadly due to, first, the constant emigration of Genoese who settled temporarily or permanently outside the city, and second, other individual events (pestilence, epidemic, and drought) that must have influenced the city's demographic density. While indications of the size of the city's population during the early Middle Ages remain hazy, rough demographic estimates suggest that during the twelfth century Genoa had about 20,000 to 40,000 inhabitants,⁸ while in the fourteenth century its population may have ranged from 50,000 to 100,000 individuals.⁹

A certain degree of mobility towards the city can be surmised from single documents which attest the presence of foreigners or religious minorities as early as from the sixth century.¹⁰ The first tangible references to immigration, however, come from extant notarial deeds of the late twelfth century; even a cursory glance at the names of the main actors of contracts from this period onwards shows the phenomenon becoming increasingly evident. In fact, most of the individuals mentioned in these deeds are registered with topographic references that identify their origins in the towns and villages of the Ligurian Levante (the area east of Genoa, which constituted the *districtus*, or the dependent territory, of the city). This is hardly surprising, since starting in the twelfth century the area was the subject of repeated initiatives by the Genoese commune to enforce its dominance to the detriment of the territory's seigneurial families.¹¹ The bond created by the commune's activities was permanent: the immigration of individuals from this area seems to have been constant, a fact confirmed by studies focused on the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.¹² Individuals who came from the immediate Genoese hinterland were another important presence in the city, a fact which seems to suggest a process of urbanization resembling that of other areas in Italy. Thus the city teemed with countryfolk whose presence in the city could be transitory or permanent; yet

8 *GMCI*, 44.

9 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 141.

10 *GMCI*, 40–41.

11 Guglielmotti, "Definizione e organizzazione," 189–90; see also chap. 2 of this volume.

12 For the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 31–7; for the fourteenth century, Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 264; for the fifteenth century, Casarino, "Estraneità," 119.

the sheer multitude of references to them is evidence of a massive migratory movement.¹³

If we try to define the composition of the urban population by attempting to classify (however approximately) the names of the main actors in and witnesses of the deeds in any of the extant notarial registers, it becomes evident that the majority of the population cannot be classified into a precise set of social strata.¹⁴ Members of the elite can be clearly identified by their surnames, but account for no more than one to two percent of the clients registered in any single notarial cartulary. Individuals who practiced a trade or profession are also immediately recognizable by their occupational titles, but account for only about thirty percent of the stipulating actors. The remaining individuals mentioned in notarial deeds are not mentioned with any qualifications that could help in determining their social position.

It is important to remember that the development of the social landscape and the social interactions reflected in notarial records were neither linear nor fixed. It would also be overly simplistic to categorize urban society into clear-cut “classes.” Even the distinctions between *nobiles* (the aristocracy) and *populares* (commoners), and then again between *mercatores* (merchants) and *artifices* (artisans)—a division introduced in the second half of the fourteenth century, which was mirrored in the structure of the government—must be taken as mere labels, for there was more than a little fluidity especially among the *populares*. Given the difficulty of establishing the identities of most of the actors, for the sake of clarity the ensuing paragraphs will concentrate on the two most identifiable segments of the social fabric: elites and artisans. Family structures and the role of women will be discussed in a separate section. Finally, in view of the constant arrival of migrants, the final paragraph will consider foreigners and other minorities, their position within the city, and the extent to which they were assimilated into the social fabric.

The Elites

During the tenth and eleventh centuries, the higher echelons of Genoese society consisted of a restricted group of landowners, who were already being

13 On the roles of the religious orders in encouraging and supporting this influx of people, see chap. 13, p. 375. On the economic effects: chap. 14, p. 410.

14 On Genoa's wealth of surviving notarial documentation, see the discussion in chap. 1, pp. 42–7.

described as *nobiles et potentes*.¹⁵ Scholars have attributed fundamental importance to the *vicecomites* (viscounts), the descendants of marquesal officers who had been entrusted by emperors with the task of representing and enforcing public power.¹⁶ From the early decades of the eleventh century, the original branches of the *vicecomites*—the Carmadino, Isola, and Manesseno—further split into new kin groups, some of whose members would participate in the consular government during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. From the few extant contemporary documents, it is evident that these kin groups were already aware of their identity as distinguished families, and of their preeminent position with respect to the rest of the city's inhabitants.¹⁷ This position of social prestige was derived not only from their landed possessions, but also from their well-documented ties with the monastery of Santo Stefano and their privileged relationship with the bishops of Genoa, who were willing to endow these families with ecclesiastical benefices.¹⁸ In addition to their possession of a landed patrimony and their vassalic ties to the bishops, the profile of these magnates was further raised through their participation in long-distance commerce, possibly as early as the mid-tenth century, in correspondence with the initial stages of Genoese maritime expansion.¹⁹

Due to the fragmentary state of the documents, it is impossible to reconstruct the genealogies of these vicecomital families precisely, and therefore to ascertain to what extent these lineages contributed to the formation of the political elite during the years following the inception of the *compagna*, the association that would become the commune (that is, during the final years of the eleventh century). It is certain that they played a role in the years just after the *compagna comunis* was first sworn,²⁰ but the social provenance of most of the consuls who held that office during the long formative phase of the communal government remains uncertain. Nonetheless, the appearance of new surnames among the elite in the last years of the eleventh century—such as della Volta, Embriaco, and Tornello, which would continue to appear among holders of the highest magistracies regularly throughout the twelfth

15 Cf. chap. 4, pp. 95–9; also Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 5.

16 *GC*, 53–6.

17 Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 5–6.

18 Cf. chaps. 3, pp. 79–80, and 13, pp. 370–72.

19 *Ibid.*, 8.

20 On the initial stages of the *compagna comunis* and the affirmation of the consular regime, *ibid.*, 41–58. For a general picture of the situation in northern Italy, Wickham, *Sleepwalking*, 1–20.

century—shows a tendency among the dominant families to adopt new family names in order to identify kin groups more specifically.²¹

Genoese society of the twelfth century was characterised by a vibrant economic and social life that translated into concrete possibilities for upward social mobility, a phenomenon which becomes more evident from the middle of the twelfth century, when sources become gradually more abundant. As stated above, the group of families that were at the pinnacle of society during the eleventh century did not maintain solid control of newly-developed communal institutions. Through the long consular phase, government posts were accessible to individuals who achieved sufficient influence, provided they fulfilled a set of necessary preconditions. The first and foremost of these was wealth, which was achievable mainly through aggressive investment in long-distance trade. Increasing competition fostered alliances with politically relevant families through common commercial interests or marriage. Finally, since this was a highly militarized society, individuals admitted to consular status were characterized by their fighting skills.²² Military prowess was a prerequisite for any individual or family pursuing a consular post; the image of the consul-warrior is, after all, a rhetorical commonplace used by the city's annalists to identify and describe the ruling elite.²³

The changes within the ruling elite were such that thirty-two different family groups held consular posts in just the first three decades of the consular government; further, during the consular period as a whole, members of about two hundred different families occupied the highest magistracies at some point as consuls (officials entrusted with the government of the city) or consuls of the pleas (officials entrusted with the administration of justice).²⁴ The governing elite of the later twelfth century was thus a solid but heterogeneous group, which included individuals of vicecomital origin as well as affluent merchants (a few of very recent fortune), who through the *compagna comunis* managed to become the ruling elite of the commune.²⁵ As long as individuals and families could meet the requirements imposed by status, new blood was welcome among the ruling elite. Certainly some families managed to maintain a more stable position as office holders than others, but the process of renewal within this governing group was constant: some families occupied institutional posts

21 Filangeri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 64–5, 70.

22 Petti Balbi, "Genesi e composizione," 120–21.

23 Filangeri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 139–48.

24 Olivieri, "Serie dei consoli," provides a complete list. See also chap. 4, pp. 97–100, on the constitution of the twelfth-century elite.

25 Polonio, "Da provincia," 159.

only briefly; others began their careers towards the end of the consular regime and managed to retain political relevance even after the transition to a podestarial regime. Thus, in 1256, on the eve of Guglielmo Boccanegra's election as *capitano del popolo*, twenty-seven of the 138 councillors of the assembly can possibly be ascribed to vicecomital families.²⁶ In this sense the election of Guglielmo Boccanegra—a member of a newly wealthy family—can be taken as a further sign of the constant influx of new elements into the aristocracy.

Despite the relative openness of the ruling elite to new members, social interactions were mainly based on a shared economic affluence. Notarial registers therefore exhibit several contracts agreed between individuals of the consular aristocracy and members of similarly affluent families who were not necessarily involved in the government. A clear example is the Rataldo family, which was active in trade during the latter decades of the twelfth century; its members appear not only as the commercial partners of individuals of the consular elite, but also as their marriage partners. For example, in 1190 Guglielmo Rataldo, who was a very affluent merchant during the latter half of the twelfth century, appeared together with his son Ansaldo in a series of commercial agreements with members of the de Castello family.²⁷ This relationship was reinforced through the marriage around the same time of Guglielmo's daughter Aimelina to Folco, the son of Folco di Castello, the only Genoese citizen who ruled the city as *podestà* (1205). Moreover, in the deed attesting the marriage between the two Aimelina declared that her two legal guardians Raimondo della Volta and Amico Mallone, both members of the consular aristocracy, were her *parentes* (relatives)—which implies that the Rataldo were also affiliated by marriage with these powerful kin groups.²⁸ Yet economic prestige and matrimonial alliances with consular families did not automatically entail political clout, and like other important commercial families the Rataldo never managed to assert their position by occupying a consular post: only one member of the family appears as a member of the assembly in the few extant public documents dating to the mid-thirteenth century.²⁹

Simone Boccanegra's "popular" rule (1339–63), the subsequent distinction between *nobiles* and *populares*, and the further subdivision (1363) of the latter into *mercatores* and *artifices* in accordance with the regulations introduced

26 Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 10–11, 133–9.

27 Oberto Scriba doc. 515 (18 July 1190), 203; docs. 533, 534 (20 July 1190), 211; doc. 663 (19 August 1190), 263. On the same family, see also Filangieri, *Famiglie e gruppi*, 154–6.

28 ASG, *Notai Antichi*, Oberto scriba de Mercato, Cart. 4, fol. 94v (20 June 1201).

29 LI 1.4.263–71, doc. 748 (5 June 1252); 1.6.172–74, doc. 1031 (20 November 1254); 1.5.13–16, doc. 824 (8 July 1267).

by Gabriele Adorno, did not simplify the structure of the Genoese social landscape.³⁰ The constant changes in the composition of the ruling elite continued well into the fourteenth century: it was participation in long-distance trade, with the possibilities of social ascent that it entailed, that promoted this characteristic of Genoese society. Trade fuelled interaction between individuals and families, and imposed upon social actors the necessity of forming alliances (whether between individuals or families)—contributing at least to a certain extent to the demolition of social barriers. Thus individuals from families who held government posts from the very inception of the commune can be observed already in the twelfth century, but even more in the fourteenth century, acting together with the more affluent *populares*—drapers (cloth merchants), judges, bankers, notaries, merchants, doctors, and apothecaries—without any explicit division between the two segments of society, at least from a behavioral point of view. Around the time of Simone Boccanegra's first *dogato* (1339), there are references to important families whose members exercised one of these distinguished professions: the de Cremona were doctors, while various members of the Vegio and Bracelli families were notaries.³¹ While not fully aristocratic, these were all professions that acted as a bridge between the higher echelons of society and the wider base of the *populares*: a sort of middle sector of an extremely stratified social conglomerate. Among these professions, we must emphasize the mediating role of the notary between the higher and the lower social strata. Endowed with *publica fides* (public trust), he was ever-present in the life of individuals of all social standings, and in the institutional organs of the urban government.³²

Within this system family bonds were of the utmost importance. Such bonds were mirrored in a tendency to reside in close proximity to one's kin, a phenomenon which became evident with the creation of the *alberghi*, whose genesis dates most probably to the late thirteenth century.³³ The *alberghi* can

30 See chaps. 4, pp. 116–18, and 5, pp. 133–7; also Petti Balbi, “Genesi e composizione,” 86.

31 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 138, 140.

32 On the issue, see Costamagna, *Notaio a Genova*, 4–32.

33 On families' tendency to reside in close proximity to one another, Hughes, “Urban Growth,” 9–10; and “Kinsmen and Neighbors,” 100–1. The previous scholarship has affirmed that the first reference to the *alberghi* dates to 1265 in relation to the Spinola family, followed by references to the Doria (1293) and Grimaldi (1295)—three of the so-called the *Quatuor Gentes*, the chief contenders for power in the city during the last three decades of the thirteenth centuries; Grendi, “Problemi di storia,” 187. These dates and our understanding of the early development of the *alberghi*, however, ought to be revised through the in-depth study of private deeds.

be described as confederacies that gathered two or more kin groups around a single aristocratic family; according to a current interpretation, they were formed out of the need to hinder the political ambitions of rival families.³⁴ This implies that the *alberghi* were based on principles of social and political distinction that came to be reflected in the organization of urban space (map 8).³⁵ The *albergo*, however, was not a fixed and immutable entity: its composition evolved continuously according to necessity. Thus individuals from other kin groups or indeed entire families could be absorbed, while a number of *alberghi* themselves split, dissolved, or merged.

The institution of the *albergo* encouraged the use of a common *cognomen*, which by the beginning of the fourteenth century had assumed its fixed and definite form linked to the notion of kin (*parentela seu cognomen*, i.e. kinship or surname). Moreover, the creation of the *alberghi* further underscored the patrilinear character of the aristocratic family.³⁶ The affiliation of individuals with these confederacies were formalized through written acts; such acts of assimilation of individuals (or groups) into an *albergo* are particularly revealing of the mentality underlying this form of associative life: individuals were accepted as if they were born within the *albergo*, and as if they truly belonged to its dominant lineage, and as such they were obliged to be active participants in the events that marked family life.³⁷ In fact, the *capitula* (written regulations) that dictated life within these confederacies/neighborhoods were so all-encompassing as to represent, within certain limits, the private administration of justice through internal arbitration.³⁸ The extent to which these developments can be taken as a watershed in the construction of the urban social fabric, however, remains one of the historiographical questions which, as Edoardo Grendi has justly suggested, still needs to be gauged through research into individual families in the notarial registers of the last three decades of the thirteenth century and the subsequent century.³⁹

34 *GC*, 26. The Genoese *albergo* as a phenomenon is also discussed in chap. 9, pp. 232–4.

35 Grendi, “Profilo storico,” 64.

36 Hughes, “Kinsmen and Neighbors,” 109.

37 Grendi, “Profilo storico,” 81–3.

38 *Ibid.*, 89. For example, in 1484 two participants in the assembly of the Franchi *albergo* were entrusted with the task of *jus et justiciam amministrare* (administering justice).

39 Grendi, “Problemi di storia,” 197; also *GC*, 17.

Artisans and the Lower Social Strata

Compared to the elite, the rest of the urban population was more complex and stratified. It was largely composed of migrants who had sought domicile in the city, undoubtedly attracted by the possibilities offered in a burgeoning city such as Genoa. The majority came from the Ligurian Levante, but a fair number of artisans came from other north Italian cities. However, while we have information about the aristocracy from considerably before the eleventh century, evidence for this component of society during the tenth and eleventh centuries is absent; the middle and lower strata of society can be reconstructed only from the mid-twelfth century onward, and more confidently from the notarial deeds of the thirteenth century onward.

This wide segment of society included artisans as well as individuals who cannot be clearly pigeonholed in the social fabric of the city. These could be unspecialized day laborers, countryfolk, small-scale merchants, or individuals in the service of an ecclesiastical institution or an aristocratic family. Artisans, however, constitute the social group that can be traced most easily, since notaries tended to register their names indicating their occupational title.

Scholars of medieval Genoa have generally attributed little importance to artisans in a city whose economy was dominated by long-distance trade. Artisans were a multivalent social group, whose activities were rarely limited to the craft they practiced. Especially during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when craft guilds were relatively new and their norms and regulations were not yet fully fixed, the structures of production seem to have been flexible and mostly based on individual choices. The availability of simple and easily accessible credit and financial instruments, such as the *commenda* and the labor partnership (which can be roughly described as the equivalent of the *commenda* agreement applied to the world of labor), meant that artisans were able to establish their own independent activities. Like more affluent professionals and the aristocracy, they were acquainted with the various commercial and financial instruments available and made ample use of them. At least during the thirteenth century, strong participation by artisans has been attested in outbound commercial ventures, both as active partners and as investors.⁴⁰ This tendency for territorial mobility was fostered by the Genoese expansionist policy in the Mediterranean. This meant that some members of this social group were frequently absent from Genoa and perhaps only loosely tied to the city. Whether this tendency survived beyond the thirteenth century has yet to

40 Cf. chap. 14, p. 407; also Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 117–34; *CASD*, 89–91. For more on the *commenda*: chap. 15, pp. 428–9.

be proven. A few indications—such as guild provisions of the fifteenth century aimed at curbing the cases in which apprenticeship was conducted out of the city—seem to suggest that by the late Middle Ages the guilds' control over the artisan population was more intense than during the thirteenth century, when such institutions were still in embryonic form.⁴¹

An analysis of the names of the chief actors in notarial deeds of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries reveals not only that social interaction occurred mainly on a horizontal plane, but also that artisans' social networks were not dependent on shared origin or common occupation. Indeed, solidarities among artisans, as well as among individuals of the lower social strata, seem to have sprung from neighborhood ties or encounters in the workplace.⁴² However, while neighborhood ties seemed to have prevailed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, indications from apprenticeship deeds of the fifteenth century have instead established the presence of bonds of solidarity between migrants who came from the same geographical location, and who often acted as intermediaries in recruiting youths from their villages to be trained in the city as master craftsmen.⁴³

Despite the quantity of notarial records, it is difficult to reconstruct the careers of artisans and those on the lower rungs of society—especially during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—in order to gauge to what extent individuals of this social segment could aspire to climb the social ladder. A few fragmentary indications suggest that a modicum of upward social mobility was indeed possible, first and foremost through the choice of trades for one's children. As a general rule, trade specialties were not passed down from parent to child. Some strategies to keep a trade within the family has been confirmed from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century apprenticeship documents pertaining to masons, locksmiths, and innkeepers, who tended to transmit their trades to their relatives, yet the same research has shown that the majority of artisans tended to have their children taught a trade with more remunerative potential.⁴⁴ Further evidence can be inferred from surnames, which attest that at least some individuals of artisan descent achieved higher social status in one of the more prestigious professions, becoming drapers or notaries. One

41 Casarino et al., *Giovani*, 76–9.

42 On neighborhood ties among artisans and less affluent individuals: Hughes, "Kinsmen and Neighbors," 105–6.

43 Casarino et al., *Giovani*, 63.

44 *Ibid.*, 129.

example is the Osbergarius (armorer) family, whose members in the mid-thirteenth century appear in notarial deeds with the qualification *notarius*.⁴⁵

Of course long-distance trade was the most obvious means of social ascent, and a few families of artisan descent derived their fortunes precisely from commerce. Such is the case of the Corriçarius (belt-maker) brothers, who around the mid-thirteenth century were able to risk 1250 lire in a single commercial venture bound to the Eastern Mediterranean—a staggering sum if we consider that single *commenda* investments made by the aristocracy generally amounted to 100 or 200 lire. The Corriçarii were also involved in commercial activities with the Cibo, a family of the consular aristocracy.⁴⁶ Moreover, as was common with aristocratic youths, several twelfth- and thirteenth-century documents illustrate fathers assisting their unemancipated sons while negotiating *commenda* partnerships. Meanwhile, the Bottario (barrel-maker), a family whose surname bears witness to their artisan origins, were coopted among the consular aristocracy. Their involvement in the political scene was short-lived, as was their social prestige, yet during the period of their pre-eminence the family managed to ally themselves through marriage with the Vento, another family of the consular aristocracy.⁴⁷ These examples, however, represent exceptions to a general rule: political participation and interaction with the aristocracy were otherwise extremely limited for the lower social strata during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Despite the establishment of a popular government with Guglielmo Boccanegra's election as *capitano del popolo* in 1257, which in theory should have opened the political stage to groups of commoners as it had done elsewhere in northern Italy, only very few craftsmen acquired political influence. Moreover, in view of the possibilities for social ascent offered to broad swathes of the population by long-distance trade, we should even question to what extent the few artisans who are mentioned as participants in assemblies (the main venue for political debate) still practiced the occupation suggested by their name, or if they had become merchants. Until the end of the thirteenth century, therefore, political institutions did not provide a venue for vertical interaction, and in any case artisans did not constitute an effective pressure group.⁴⁸ When artisans mingled with the aristocracy, it meant that their family had moved up the social ladder, or conversely that the fortunes of the aristo-

45 Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 29.

46 ASG, *Notai Antichi*, Ingo Contardo, Cart. 26.1, fol. 25v (25 August 1252) and fol. 16r (16 August 1252).

47 Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 27–8.

48 Polonio, "Da provincia," 194; GC, 109–10.

cratic family in question had eroded. Two examples will illustrate this point: on the one hand, Guglielmo *batifolium* (gold-beater), whose commercial activities with the della Volta, Mallone and de Flessio families are attested around the end of the twelfth century, can be defined more as a merchant than as an artisan. On the other hand, a smith called Recordato married off his daughter in 1252 to a member of the Elia; this was a family of the consular aristocracy, but by the mid-thirteenth century it had lost all political influence.⁴⁹

Artisans started to play a larger role in politics only in the mid-fourteenth century, when the commons began to gain ground. The *populares* constituted a heterogenous group including merchants, artisans, and those who were not part of the vicecomital and consular aristocracy.⁵⁰ With the establishment of the *dogato* of Simone Boccanegra in 1339, the guilds were reorganized according to new legislation, and the consuls of each guild became intermediaries between artisans and the communal government. Additionally, a number of occupational groups acquired political prominence: apart from the notaries, bankers and drapers, who kept their roles as representatives of prestigious and more remunerative professions, wool workers, smiths and apothecaries gained access to important roles within the government. Those artisans who held pre-eminent roles under the doges were able to construct their own dynasties. The case of Antonio Rubeo di Sampierdarena, a butcher who practiced his trade in the neighborhood of Soziglia, is particularly significant. After being elected to the assembly of the *anziani*, he was an ambassador between 1339 and 1344 and occupied the office of vice-doge in 1359. He therefore occupied a long-standing position of prestige, which may have encouraged him to exhibit behavioral traits typical of the aristocracy; these are reflected in his imposing funerary monument in Santa Maria delle Vigne.⁵¹

During the fourteenth century, the system of the *alberghi* was replicated among the *populares*. Interestingly enough some of the surnames of these commoner *alberghi* derived from Ligurian toponymics, such as Rapallo, a further indication of the inbound migratory flow from areas east of Genoa to the city.⁵² While previous literature has traced the salient features of the *alberghi* pertaining to the nobility and some of the leading *populares* families, the roles of artisans within these confederacies, their weight in the development of these institutions and the social intercourse that sprang from these associations is still in want of evaluation: to date, the problem remains open.

49 Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 142–3.

50 Heers, "Urbanisme," 385.

51 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 261, 267–8.

52 Grendi, "Profilo storico," 75–6.

Family and Gender

Family bonds were instrumental in shaping the social framework of the city. In discussing family structures in medieval Genoa, we cannot fail to take into account Diane Owen Hughes' series of studies on Genoese society. These have underscored the differences between the aristocratic and artisanal social groups, which (she argues) exhibited diametrically-opposed family structures. Described as a "joint patriarchal family," the family model typical of the higher echelons of society was characterized by a strictly patrilinear and hierarchical internal organization. Within this system, youths were subject to the authority of their older male relatives until emancipation, which occurred relatively late, around the age of twenty-five.⁵³ Until formally emancipated, a youth was legally unable to act on his own behalf: young male aristocrats were therefore normally initiated into the practice of long-distance trade by their fathers, who had to be present and give their consent to contracts stipulated by their sons. Inheritance was maintained within the family and apportioned equally between sons—to the detriment of daughters, each of whom was allotted a dowry that excluded her from any claim on the bulk of the family's wealth. Even in the absence of a direct male heir, a man's inheritance would pass to his brothers or nephews.⁵⁴ Among the aristocracy, intra-familial bonds were strong: the fostering of alliances, especially through marriage, and association into larger kin groups were both responses to increasing political and economic competition and escalating internal conflict during the twelfth century. Such tight bonds, which guaranteed the continuity of the lineage, were also reflected in the tendency of members of the same family and their allies to reside in the same neighborhood⁵⁵—a practice which, as previously stated, was further strengthened with the creation of the *alberghi*.

Conversely, according to Hughes, the structure of the artisan family (and perhaps by extension the lower strata of society) was based on the bond between spouses, to the exclusion of extended kin.⁵⁶ Lack of economic resources and above all the practice of apprenticeship seem to have played a central role in weakening bonds among broader kin groups. Most young men as well as a fair number of girls from artisan backgrounds were placed with master craftsmen as apprentices for anywhere from four to twelve years, in order to learn their trades. Very few apprenticeship contracts provided for a child to spend

53 Hughes, "Urban Growth," 5–7, 18.

54 Hughes, "Domestic Ideals," 119–20, 122–3.

55 Hughes, "Urban Growth," 9–10, and "Kinsmen and Neighbors," 100–1.

56 Hughes, "Urban Growth," 5–7, 13, and "Domestic Ideals," 126–30; GC, 28.

time with his natal family, so a child's parents would play only a marginal role in his upbringing.

This long period spent away from their natal families, according to Hughes, led to the estrangement of artisan youths from their kin groups. As a result, once a young artisan married his bond with his wife would take precedence. According to this interpretation, therefore, artisan households followed a nuclear family model, tending to exclude members of the extended family.⁵⁷ It is, however, extremely difficult to evaluate if these bonds with the natal family were indeed severed following apprenticeship and marriage. Moreover, the phenomena of cohabitation with or in proximity to relatives that has been identified as characteristic of the aristocratic family cannot entirely be disproven for artisans. The documentary sources on which we have to base our conclusions illustrate only two specific moments in the family life-cycle: marriage (via dowries) and death (via wills). Between these two moments, a family's composition could undergo several transformations depending on the circumstances: for example, members of the extended family could easily be welcomed and housed for a period of time when in need of shelter. Instances like these that would not normally have required notarial attestation are evident in other sources like personal diaries that have been preserved in a few Italian cities and date from a later period.⁵⁸ Moreover, research conducted with fifteenth- and sixteenth-century documents has revealed that artisans from villages in Liguria who had migrated to the city often acted as a foothold for relatives who would later join them in Genoa.⁵⁹ Further clues to artisans' continued relationships with family members come from their wills: while it is certainly true that some artisans decided to bequeath their assets to their spouses,⁶⁰ others chose to leave all their belongings to members of their natal families, probably in an effort to safeguard their patrimony lest family resources be used by the surviving spouse to set up a new family.

We should now turn our attention to the social role of women, an issue which can be understood only if we consider the legal changes affecting patrimonial transmission that were introduced towards the mid-twelfth century.⁶¹

57 Hughes, "Domestic Ideals," 125–6, and "Urban Growth," 23–5.

58 A case in point concerns Gaspare Nadi, a Bolognese mason, whose diary reveals how he cohabited with various members of his family during his lifetime; Klapisch-Zuber, "Vie domestique," 489–92, 498. For a discussion of Hughes' thesis see also Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 155ff., and "Artisan Family."

59 Casarino, "Mondo artigiano," 236.

60 Hughes, "Struttura familiare," 940.

61 On this topic, see the discussion in chap. 6, pp. 154–9.

A law issued in 1143, in fact, revoked a widow's right to the *tercia* (one-third part of her husband's belongings), which was thereafter replaced by the dowry and *antefactum* (a marriage gift given by the husband). Diane Owen Hughes has justly pointed out that such a norm, introduced at a time when the aristocracy were gaining increasing political power, was aimed at avoiding the dispersion of the family patrimony in order to maintain political and military influence,⁶² and certainly signalled the transition towards a patrilinear structure of the transmission of wealth. Hughes has further suggested that this policy chiefly affected aristocratic women, for the portion of family assets allotted to them was less representative of the gross family patrimony than the share allocated to artisan women. In this sense, according to Hughes, artisan women retained far more authority than their aristocratic counterparts, a fact which was also due to the equal contribution of artisanal spouses to the initial fund supporting the family (in the majority of cases among artisans, the sum of money given in dowry equalled the *antefactum*), and visible in the artisans' tendency to name their spouses as heir.⁶³ The conjugal bond was certainly important, and women from the artisan group generally enjoyed some leeway—especially if we consider that a fair number of artisan women managed their own business activities distinct from the trade exercised by their spouses.

Recent research has added complexity to Hughes' assumptions. With regard to aristocratic women, for example, a recent study of women's wills during the fourteenth century has highlighted cases in which the dowries granted to aristocratic women were very high, suggesting that women—widows in particular—were not always relegated to subordinate roles.⁶⁴ But the question of female agency—especially of married women—demands further investigation. Women of every social standing were often appointed as legal agents for their husbands in their absence, which means at least theoretically that aristocratic women were often entrusted with the task of managing family affairs.⁶⁵ Furthermore, studies of female investors in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries have shown how women from both the aristocracy and the lower social strata invested their disposable income in long-distance trade or else in the activities of artisans through labor partnerships.⁶⁶ This means that into the early thirteenth century women of all social standings still

62 Hughes, "Urban Growth," 13–15.

63 Ibid., 23–5.

64 Petti Balbi, "*Donna et domina*," 163.

65 Petti Balbi, "L'assedio di Genova," 12, and "*Donna et domina*," 170; Hughes tends to see these instances as mere exceptions: "Domestic Ideals," 138. The social roles of aristocratic women require further investigation.

66 Angelos, "Women in *Commenda* Contracts," 309, 311.

enjoyed a considerable margin of freedom in managing their personal property. But ongoing research on non-dotal assets is revealing that, as in other north-central Italian communes, married women gradually began to be hindered in acquiring and managing property of their own, and this applies to both aristocratic and artisan women.⁶⁷ Notarial deeds suggest that from as early as the late thirteenth century women often voluntarily conferred their non-dotal property upon their husbands, who were then free to manage it on their wives' behalf. This may have been true especially during the fourteenth century, when women are mostly attested as investors in public debt.⁶⁸ While private documents continue to attest to the investment activities of married women, therefore, the extent to which such women managed (or wanted) to carve out for themselves a degree of agency is still debatable.

Foreigners, Aliens, Strangers, and Religious Minorities

In the initial paragraphs of this chapter I hinted at the massive immigration that was partly responsible for fuelling the rapid growth of Genoa's urban population: it is therefore evident that a fair segment of the urban population at any given time consisted of non-Genoese. During the Middle Ages any individual who came from a distant geographic area (be it Italy or beyond the peninsula) and who did not possess Genoese citizenship was considered a foreigner. This notion, however, was not consistently applied in Genoese colonies around the Mediterranean: while other Ligurians were considered foreigners in Genoa, those Ligurians who had migrated to or were temporarily resident in the colonies were assimilated and considered to be Genoese. The majority of these *forici homines* or *foritani* (literally, men from outside) who settled in the city came as previously discussed from villages in the Genoese *districtus* and from the Genoese hinterland, but a consistent number of migrants came from other north Italian cities, and particularly from those cities with which Genoa maintained commercial and political ties. The presence of individuals from Piacenza, Asti, Milan, and Florence is attested throughout the Middle Ages.⁶⁹ At least during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, individuals from outside of Italy were fewer in number: there are references to individuals

67 For a more in-depth discussion see Bezzina, "Charting the *extrados*" and "Married Women, Law and Wealth."

68 Kamenaga Anzai, "Attitudes Towards Public Debt," 246–9, 259–60.

69 See, for example, Barni, "Mercanti milanesi"; Racine, "Mercanti piacentini" (1990) and "Mercanti piacentini" (1992). On the legal status of *habitatores* (inhabitants) vs. *cives* (citizens): chap. 6, p. 148.

from the Iberian peninsula, the Midi, and German areas as well as from the eastern Mediterranean; during the last decades of the twelfth century, even a few immigrants from London are mentioned.⁷⁰ The foreign population mirrors the complex social stratification which has been observed in non-aristocratic Genoese: individuals from all social social rungs sought domicile in the city, from more affluent merchants to those living on the fringes of society.

Migration followed two divergent paths: individuals could choose to settle permanently in Genoa, or else to reside in the city only temporarily; their presence within the city was tied to a wide array of reasons. The most obvious motive relies on Genoa's position as an international commercial hub; obviously, numerous foreigners were attracted to the Ligurian city because of the earning potential tied to long-distance trade. Various studies have attested the presence of bankers from Piacenza and Lombardy as well as from German and Flemish areas, while as early as the mid-twelfth century numerous cloth merchants from the Midi operated in the city.⁷¹ High-level commerce was certainly not the only reason for the influx of foreigners, however, as the city attracted artisans in search of better work conditions, who hoped to establish their own business activities. Foreigners were particularly prominent in the wool industry,⁷² probably because it was the sector which employed the largest segment of the working population, but craftsmen who practiced other trades also flocked to the city. The commune's negotiation of commercial relationships by diplomatic means encouraged immigration, and the city also attracted foreigners because of the commune's constant state of warfare. Foreign mercenaries were engaged to fight in the urban militia either by institutions, or—as twelfth-century notarial deeds prove—by private individuals who wanted to elude conscription by paying a substitute to fight in their place. Foreigners were also motivated to reside in the city for political reasons: during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a series of foreign officials, judges, and intellectuals were called to hold government posts such as that of *podestà*, while during the early decades of the fifteenth century individuals from elite families settled in the city, first during Angevin rule and subsequently under the Visconti. Finally, the presence of foreigners could be triggered by endogenous or personal reasons; for example, individuals might be seeking shelter from plague or warfare in their own cities.⁷³

70 Reynolds, "English Settlers." On chapels and churches as focal points of foreign communities in Genoa: chap. 12, p. 352.

71 Petti Balbi, "Presenze straniere," 135.

72 Lopez, "Origini dell'Arte," 95.

73 Petti Balbi, "Presenze straniere," 137.

The presence of foreigners in Genoa was regulated at an institutional level even before the *compagna comunis* was sworn during the final years of the eleventh century. One of the earliest measures concerning aliens resident in Genoa is revealed in a convention dated 1056, which decreed that like Genoese *cives* (citizens), these *forici homines* were obliged to provide armed service in defence of the city.⁷⁴ Additionally, the consuls' *Breve* of 1128 established that foreigners who came to Genoa for commercial purposes should be taxed differently from the Genoese.⁷⁵ The presence of foreigners was regulated by the *consules foritanorum* (officials entrusted with the task of settling disputes involving foreigners), who appear in notarial deeds as witnesses, especially in the registers of notaries whose clientele hailed mainly from the lower echelons of society. The various foreign communities present in Genoa also had their own consuls, each of whom was entrusted with the task of safeguarding the interests of his own community.⁷⁶ The presence of these officials was consistent throughout the Middle Ages, their election invariably dictated by rule self-imposed by the members of their communities of reference.

Scholars have tended to stress the relationships entertained by foreigners within their own communities, thereby establishing a clear boundary between *foritani* and *cives*. Certainly the presence of consuls and *hospicia* (hostels run by foreign communities for their own members) points to the existence of a mutual support system devised by the different communities of aliens resident in the city. Yet the state of being a foreigner implied that a single individual could be integrated into more than one community: the existence of well-knit groups encompassing individuals who share a common origin does not imply their isolation from the remainder of the urban population. Notarial records affirm that extraneity was not an obstacle to integration within the host community, nor did it prevent these foreign actors from entertaining relationships with members of other alien communities who had also settled in the city. Foreigners stipulated a high number of transactions with individuals of different origins: for example, a contract dated 1248 illustrates the purchase of a quantity of woad from Andriolo, an apothecary, by Philippo, a Florentine dyer, together with Simone, a woolworker from Pavia.⁷⁷ Likewise, references to marriages contracted in Genoa indicate their participants' will to settle permanently in the city: a dowry deed dated 1248 registers the marriage of Ugolino, a Florentine woolworker, to Stefanina, daughter of Piacentino from Chiavari,

74 *LI* 1.1.15–18, doc. 2 (May 1056).

75 Petti Balbi, "Presenze straniere," 131.

76 *Ibid.*, 143.

77 *ASG, Notai Antichi*, Bartolomeo Fornari, Cart. 26.2, fol. 131r (25 June 1248).

while in 1261, Giacomo, a smith from Piacenza, received the dowry of his wife Verdina, daughter of a certain Ugone from Val di Taro.⁷⁸ Finally, the acquisition of citizenship is a further gauge of inclusion within the fabric of urban society. Indeed, various references in notarial deeds from as early as the thirteenth century mention foreigners who had acquired Genoese citizenship—such as, for instance, a woolworker from Milan named Giacomo who in 1247 was registered as *civis Ianuensis*,⁷⁹ or a certain Ospinello from Florence who in 1265 was likewise registered by a notary as a citizen of Genoa.⁸⁰ Similar references abound, which implies that foreigners were easily assimilated within the urban community, a process facilitated by the ease with which Genoese citizenship was granted.

The citizenship process underwent few changes through time: until as late as the end of the fourteenth century, in order to obtain Genoese citizenship and be allowed to settle permanently in the city, it was sufficient for a foreigner to be resident in Genoa and take an oath to abide by the same obligations required of the *cives*. Citizenship granted foreigners the same rights as the Genoese, including the possibility of government appointment. Only during the early years of the fourteenth century was a three-year residence in the city included as a citizenship requirement. This inclusiveness on the part of the government has been held as a sign of the openness of the city to foreign elements.⁸¹ Indeed, aliens could be so well integrated into the social fabric that a few who belonged to the higher echelons managed to attain nobility: for example, the Pedralbes, a family of Catalan origin whose members first gained the right to inhabit the city in 1472. They eventually obtained full citizenship and by 1528 were inscribed among the nobility and included in the Lomellini *albergo*.⁸² Similar ascents among the ranks of noble families are attested around the same period: the Egra family, of German origin, was considered part of the De Martini family, while the Panigarola and Rotolo families, both from Milan, were admitted into the *alberghi* of the De Negro and the Pallavicino families respectively.⁸³

We can also include slaves—whose presence in the city is attested throughout the Middle Ages—within the category of “foreigners”. Their origins varied from eastern Europe to north Africa, and the prevalence of one group over the other largely depended on the ebb and flow of Genoese commercial activity in

78 ASG, *Notai Antichi*, Leonardo Negrino, Cart. 97, fol. 160r (20 April 1294).

79 ASG, *Notai Antichi*, Matteo di Predono, Cart. 31.1, fol. 57v (30 April 1247).

80 ASG, *Notai Antichi*, Guglielmo di San Giorgio, Cart. 70, fol. 117r (30 December 1264).

81 Petti Balbi, “Presenze straniere,” 138.

82 Casarino, “Stranieri,” 161.

83 Ibid., 160.

a particular area.⁸⁴ Most were kept as help in homes of both affluent and less affluent individuals, or else were engaged in agriculture and on ships (but to a lesser degree, given the risk of escape).⁸⁵ However, the presence of a flourishing slave market meant that their presence in the city could be merely transitory. Very often, in fact, they were sold; a few contracts even attest the sale of entire families.⁸⁶

A fair number of slaves were Muslims: it is however, extremely difficult to establish their provenance since the sources generally refer to Muslims as *sar-raceno* or *sarracena*, omitting their place of origin.⁸⁷ Wills show that emancipation and manumission were fairly common practices, which implies that former slaves—irrespective of faith or origin—were able to mingle with and become fully absorbed within the Genoese community upon attaining their freedom, while there are also indications of individuals who converted to Christianity. It is also worth noting that the presence of Muslims was not limited to individuals relegated to servile condition: sources from the late thirteenth century mention two Maghrebian scribes working for the commune, a fact which can be explained by the city's ongoing commercial relationships with north Africa and hence the need of the commune to establish diplomatic ties.⁸⁸ In addition to this, merchants from Ifriqiya and Morocco certainly came to the city, and during the thirteenth century treaties were signed granting protection to Tunisian merchants in Genoa and its *districtus*.⁸⁹ These, however, are all sporadic references; the records analyzed so far have yielded insufficient information to form a clear picture of the relationship between Genoa's Christian and non-Christian communities during the Middle Ages.

This applies to other religious minorities as well. The presence of a Jewish community is attested at least from the sixth century—by two letters from Theoderic king of Italy to the Jewish community in Genoa—yet thereafter references to Jewish individuals are extremely difficult to find.⁹⁰ Their presence

84 On slavery in the medieval Mediterranean and in Genoa more specifically: Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, and Amitai/Cluse, *Slavery* (especially the articles by Balard and Stello); also Cluse, "Zur Repräsentation." On slaves' origins in the fifteenth century, Giofrè, *Mercato degli schiavi*, 58–61. See also discussion in chap. 14, pp. 405ff.

85 Cluse, "Frauen in Sklaverei."

86 Ibid., 17.

87 Jehel, "Jews and Muslims," 124–5.

88 Jehel, "Jews and Muslims," 125.

89 Ibid., 130.

90 Urbani/Zazzu, *Jews in Genoa*, 1.x; this absence has also been mentioned by Abulafia (*Two Italies*, 238). Jehel argues that this conclusion ought to be revised, being based merely on the absence of sources: "Jews and Muslims," 126.

seems to have been sporadic and intermittent: the absence of an established community was in fact commented upon in the late twelfth century by the traveler Benjamin of Tudela.⁹¹ It is known that up until the first two decades of the thirteenth century a small number of Provençal Jews lived in the city,⁹² but subsequent attestations are even rarer. No documents have so far been found describing individuals as *iudei* (Jews) between the last decade of the thirteenth century and the late 1370s. In this sense, the most solid evidence dates to the mid-fifteenth century, when a number of safe-conducts were issued by the authorities that allowed Jews to settle and work in the city. This led to the establishment of a sizeable Jewish community by the late fifteenth century.⁹³

Despite the inherent potential of Genoa's extraordinarily rich documentary landscape, therefore, the research on Genoese society to date has permitted only a glimpse into an everchanging and multifarious social conglomerate. While past and more recent scholarly literature has helped trace a profile of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Genoese society, both with regard to its higher echelons and its lower rungs, much has yet to be done to establish with greater precision the changes in the urban social fabric during the centuries that followed. In this sense, as Edoardo Grendi justly observed two decades ago, the genesis and the development of the *alberghi*, and their impact on the social structures of the city, remains a crucial problem which needs to be approached through deeper study of the extant notarial protocols of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.⁹⁴

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91 *Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, 5.

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PART 3

Culture and Religion



Civic Identity

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As this volume demonstrates repeatedly, the Genoese were renowned in the Middle Ages for their extraordinary commercial success and the international scope of their activities—not only among Italian cities but throughout the medieval world, from the Baltic to North Africa and the Black Sea. The city's greatest accomplishments were often the result of joint or communal enterprises: the major contribution of the Genoese to the First Crusade, memorialized in the civic annals by Caffaro, is a good example. Most of those ventures, however, flourished because of the opportunities they provided for personal benefit, and most of the assets (whether landed or monetary) accumulated by Genoese individuals and families came from individual or small-group ventures, which naturally created a strong atmosphere of competition. Thus it is hardly surprising that contemporaries had strongly held, often contradictory, opinions about the Genoese: while admirers such as Petrarch praised the city in glowing terms such as *La Superba*, “the proud,” detractors of the same period stereotyped the Genoese as pirates, fanatical individualists lacking any sense of honor or loyalty.¹ And in fact, the persistence of such widely divergent stereotypes—the cosmopolitan-merchant positive against the selfish-pirate negative—reflects a deeper tension in the medieval city's inhabitants' sense of community.

Any analysis of civic identity or civic consciousness (*coscienza civica*) in medieval Genoa must therefore acknowledge this framework of considerable tension between centrifugal impulses (prioritizing individual benefit) and centripetal ones (prioritizing contributions to the common good).² The importance of the common good over that of the individual was much debated among the social theorists of communal Italy, but perhaps nowhere were its

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- 1 Petrarch, *Guide* 2.0. Five of the eight pirates appearing in Boccaccio's *Decameron* are specifically identified as Genoese; see Tai, *Honor Among Thieves*, 2–54; Grossi, “Imaging Genoa”; Petti Balbi, “L'identità negata.” Definitions of piracy, of course, are relative: see the examples given in chaps. 5, p. 139, and 16, pp. 453–7. Except where noted, all translations in this chapter are my own.
 - 2 On civic identity in medieval Italy generally, see (among others) *Coscienza cittadina*; Oldfield, *City and Community*; Bettini, *Miti*; and Beneš, *Urban Legends*. From an art-historical perspective, see also Cassidy, *Politics*, and Zchomelidse, *Art*.

implications so concretely tested as in Genoa.³ The city's history reveals clearly both the advantage to all parties when self-interest paralleled communal benefit, and the disarray that frequently resulted when the two did not align, and parties were compelled to choose between them.⁴ The symbols, myths, institutions, and rituals by which the medieval Genoese attempted to express a sense of unified civic identity therefore reflect the city's proudest achievements as well as its greatest challenges and failures. This dichotomy also echoes in recent scholarship: while Genoa's civic culture and identity politics have been extensively explored by prominent local scholars such as Giovanna Petti Balbi, others have challenged the notion that the medieval Genoese had a sense of civic identity at all.⁵ Yet there is no question that "the Genoese" did unite for certain events and on certain issues of general interest; that prominent civic figures advanced arguments in favor of unity in the face of factionalism and rebellion; and that even during the city's worst periods of political instability, associations in other spheres (religious, social, cultural) preserved a sense of Genoese identity. This chapter will explore the ways in which Genoese collective identity was expressed, and by whom, while also considering some of the factors that made a "unified Genoa" difficult to promote or maintain.

Civic Symbols

Like the inhabitants of other medieval Italian cities, the Genoese adopted a number of symbols to represent themselves and their city over the course of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. Perhaps predictably, this process of representation paralleled the development of the commune—a phenomenon that began as an association of citizens (*compagna*) in 1099 and gradually evolved into the formal apparatus of government.⁶ As the commune represented the city-state of Genoa, and as members of the commune controlled the city's self-representation in both subject and medium, the rhetoric and symbolism adopted for the city were largely driven by the commune's priorities. "Official" symbols like the monumental gate, the griffin, and the city's

3 Kempshall, *Common Good*; the works of Ptolemy of Lucca and Remigio de' Girolami are often cited on this point.

4 See the examples discussed in chaps. 5, pp. 122–8, and 17, pp. 479–80.

5 The classic work is Petti Balbi, "Mito cittadino," but see also Petti Balbi, "Genova"; for the latter, see the works cited under "Successes and Failures," below.

6 See chap. 4, pp. 99–105.

mythical founder Janus were chosen to convey the virtues useful to an independent, competitive maritime republic.

The most imposing of these is the monumental gate or portal. While a first set of city walls dated from the ninth century, the city's intramural space more than doubled with the construction of a new circuit of walls in the mid-twelfth century. The three main gates in the new walls—the Porta Aurea (no longer extant), Porta dei Vacca (originally Porta di Santa Fede, fig. 3), and Porta Soprana, or Porta Sant'Andrea (fig. 4)—officially separated urban space from suburban space; they protected the city's inhabitants and property from attack; they served as transit points in and out; and they signaled the city's great wealth through lavish public spending. Thus these physical boundary markers also served as monumental signs of Genoa's wealth and commercial focus: appropriately, a gate or portal appears on the Genoese coinage from at least 1139 (figs. 60–61).⁷

The walls even took on a propagandistic significance between 1155 and 1163, when the section around the Porta Soprana (fig. 4) was hurriedly completed to discourage an attack by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa during his campaigns in Italy.⁸ Caffaro records a crisis in 1159 when, under heightened threat, Genoa's citizens intensified construction and the incomplete wall “was finished in fifty-three days through the effort of the whole citizenry and people.”⁹ The Porta Soprana still bears an inscription from that period (fig. 5), part of which reads: “I am strong in men, circled by marvelous walls, and in my virtue I drive hostile missiles far away ... South, west, north, and east know how many a provoked Genoa has defeated in war.”¹⁰ The inscription focuses on the strength of the city's defenses—deterring attack both physically and by implication—and by extrapolation, praises Genoa's security as an independent city-state. Caffaro's annal makes a similar point about strength and deterrence: “they constructed 1,700 battlements, as much to make the wall look attractive and to make it stronger as for the convenience and safety of the city and its citizens.” In fact,

7 Day/Matzke/Saccocci, *Medieval European Coinage* 12.251–82; Pesce/Felloni, *Monete genovesi*, 13–17.

8 On the gifts presented to Frederick in 1154: Otto of Freising, *Deeds* 2.16; ed. Mierow, 130. Frederick destroyed Tortona (between Milan and Genoa) in 1155 (*Deeds* 2.17–26; ed. Mierow, 130–42); while Otto attempts to frame Frederick's campaign as a success, Mierow notes that the choice of Tortona for destruction rather than Milan or Genoa “was a confession of imperial weakness” (142n53). On Frederick's meeting with the Genoese in 1158, see Rahewin (continuing Otto's work), *Deeds* 4.12 (Mierow, 244).

9 *AGC* for 1159, 1.54; trans. Hall/Phillips, 84–5. See also discussions in chaps. 9, pp. 221–22, and 12, p. 347.

10 Dufour Bozzo, *Porta urbana*, 301–13.

the completed wall seems to have been an effective deterrent since Frederick turned his attention elsewhere. Recalling this great moment of civic solidarity, the gate therefore combined a message of urban wealth and trade with one of security and impenetrable defense, providing a visual link between Genoese monuments and the seals and coins upon which they were miniaturized.

The “gate” symbol held further overtones, however. Chiefly, its use capitalized on the medieval fondness for etymology, since the common medieval form of Genoa was *Ianua*, Latin for gate or portal.¹¹ The *ianua* portrayed on the city’s coins paralleled the *Ianua* (Genoa) in their inscription: the symbolic gate (*ianua*), Genoa’s own city gates, and the city as a whole (*Ianua*) were all mutually self-referential. In addition, the “gate as city” metaphor encouraged conceptual inversion: from at least the beginning of the thirteenth century, Genoa was commonly characterized as the “gateway to Lombardy,” a phrase that emphasized the city’s important position connecting the sea to the Po valley via its passes over the Apennines—or alternatively as the “gateway to the vast world,” emphasizing the breadth of the city’s maritime networks for anyone coming south over those same passes.¹² In the city annals for 1221, Marchisio *scriba* employs this metaphor when recording the financial support provided by the Genoese to Frederick II: “Genoa [*Ianua*], which is figuratively called Gate [*ianua*], truly was a gateway for him [Frederick], because through Genoa he achieved that which he hoped, and reached the height of the imperial dignity.”¹³ The Genoese therefore capitalized on their city’s name and its associations with gates and portals, with particular emphasis on its gatekeeping functions—keeping good people safe and facilitating ethical conduct and positive actions, while keeping evil out and discouraging misconduct.

Some of the same characteristics are evoked by the other chief symbol adopted by the medieval commune, that of the griffin. A fantastical hybrid of eagle and lion, the griffin was first used as a civic symbol in the later twelfth century. Griffins were considered symbols of intelligence, strength, and ferocity, all characteristics appropriate to the notoriously bellicose Genoese: in the late twelfth century, the city’s seal channeled the griffin’s renowned ferocity by

11 Petti Balbi (“Mito cittadino,” 315) dates the shift in usage from classical *Genua* to medieval *Ianua* to the tenth century.

12 Anonimo genovese (*Poesie*, 557–69, esp. 566), but also authors such as Giovanni Balbi: Petti Balbi, *Caffaro*, 52–3. The mid-fourteenth-century tomb of the Milanese Giovanni Visconti lists among the cities he conquered, “Genoa, which, founded in ancient times, is named after Janus, and is said to be the gate of the vast world”: Faraggiana di Sarzana, “Gabrio Zamorei,” 242.

13 AGC for 1221, 2.173.

depicting its image with the inscription *Griphus ut has angit, sic hostes Ianua frangit* ("as the griffin chokes these [other animals], so Genoa crushes its enemies") (fig. 58).¹⁴ A bronze griffin was commissioned for the cathedral in 1222, but destroyed in a fire during the riots of 1295–6; its replacement was then commissioned in less-flammable marble sometime after 1297 (fig. 44).¹⁵ At around the same time, the griffin also began to appear on the civic coinage (fig. 59).¹⁶ Its presence in these various forms and in diverse venues thus gave the griffin an inescapable presence within and around medieval Genoa. While the griffin was relegated to supporting status in the Renaissance once the cross of Saint George was established as Genoa's coat of arms, griffins are still featured as supporters on the city's standard today.¹⁷ In this sense, the beast's heraldic use in Genoa paralleled that of the wolf in Rome or Siena, or the lion in Venice or Florence.¹⁸

The gate and the griffin were established as symbols fairly early in Genoa's history as an independent commune, in the twelfth century, and seem to have been chosen for the characteristics they implicitly conferred: fierce independence, strong defenses, and status as a nexus of travel and trade. In the thirteenth century, a third figurative symbol joined these two. While its significance rested on history instead of on inherent characteristics, like the gate (*ianua*) it was etymologically derived: historians of the city began attributing the city's name (*Ianua*) to a founding father called Janus (*Ianus*). This was a common extrapolation in the Middle Ages; it was well-known that Rome was founded by Romulus, but claims were also made for the founding of Florence,

14 The seal, which Pavoni dates to 1193–9, shows a griffin attacking a fox eating a chicken: *CGM*, 199. Historians have proposed various meanings to these figures; Pavoni, "Simboli," 56–9; Bascapé, *Sigillografia*, 1.259–60; Petti Balbi, "Genova," 138–40, which includes good color reproductions of both gate and griffin seals on Genoese charters in the municipal archive of Montpellier. Polonio ("Universalismo," 13) sees the griffin's replacement of Saint Syrus on the city seal as evidence of a growing separation of interests between commune and cathedral. See also chap. 5, pp. 125–8, on the seal's historical context, and chap. 12, p. 347, on an earlier civic seal.

15 *CGM*, 196–9; also *GMCI*, 193.

16 Pesce/Felloni, *Monete genovesi*, 13–14; the earliest examples they give are *quartari* of the early 1330s (26).

17 <http://www.comune.genova.it>. The griffin is also the mascot of one of the city's two major football (soccer) clubs, Genoa CFC.

18 See the works cited in n. 2, above. Identifying a particularly Genoese significance for the griffin is difficult since it was used by numerous contemporary cities, including rival Pisa. On the famous Pisa Griffin: Balafrej, "Saracen or Pisan?" and Weinryb, *Bronze Object*, 140–46. Weinryb (140) suggests it may have been a spoil of war stolen from Genoa.

Siena, and Capua by historical figures named (respectively) Fiorinus, Senius, and Capys.¹⁹ Furthermore, classical tradition connected the Roman god Janus to portals, gates, and doorways, so the characterization of Genoa, the “gateway to the vast world,” as the “city of Janus” simply reinforced pre-existing logic.

The phrase first appears in two works of the early thirteenth century (the civic annals and a poem about a Genoese victory over Frederick II by the notary Ursone da Sestri) as a simple epithet (“the city of Janus”), without any kind of historical explanation.²⁰ By the later thirteenth century, however, the legend of Janus as the founding father of Genoa had been more fully fleshed out. First, Jacopo Doria, the last official communal annalist (treating the years 1280–93), began his section of the chronicle by attempting to rectify previous chroniclers’ neglect of the city’s origins. He records the “common opinion” that Genoa was founded by an escaped Trojan prince called Janus, who arrived in Genoa after the Trojan War.²¹

At approximately the same time, the city’s archbishop Jacopo da Varagine (best known for his *Golden Legend*) also began to write a history of Genoa, starting with the city’s origins.²² Building on Doria’s work, Jacopo da Varagine attempts to reconcile three different origin legends, all of which sought to link a founder called Janus to the foundation of Genoa.²³ The first derived from Paul the Deacon’s *Historia Romana*, which picked up on scattered references in the classical tradition (e.g. Virgil’s *Aeneid*) to identify a Janus as an early king of Italy after the Flood; Jacopo claims this Janus as the original founder of Genoa. Jacopo’s second Janus is the same Trojan prince referred to by Jacopo Doria, whom he claims came to Genoa after the Trojan War, and made what was then a small town “bigger and better.” His third Janus is the Roman god, whom he identifies as a mortal man who accomplished a great favor for the Romans, and was thereafter worshiped by them as a god. According to Jacopo, this Janus was adopted in Genoa out of its great friendship with ancient Rome.

Jacopo’s is the fullest explanation connecting Genoa to a founder named Janus. While his claims could have been limited to readers of his chronicle, the commune and the cathedral chapter chose to proclaim them publicly as

19 Beneš, *Urban Legends*, 15–22; Isidore, *Etymologies* 15.1.6–77.

20 AGC for 1227, 3.26; Petti Balbi, *Caffaro*, 57–8.

21 Doria: AGC for 1280, 5.4. On the civic annals generally, see chap. 1, pp. 37–9.

22 JVC, translated into Italian by Bertini Guidetti as Jacopo, *Cronaca*. I am presently completing an English translation of the work (forthcoming from Manchester, 2018). On Jacopo’s work, see also the discussions elsewhere in this volume: chap. 1, pp. 36–7, and chap. 11, pp. 327–8.

23 JVC 1.1–4, *Cronaca* 81–94 and 340–49.

part of the renovations of the cathedral of San Lorenzo in the early years of the fourteenth century—a phenomenon that Di Fabio and Petti Balbi have called the “Christianization of Janus.”²⁴ This included the mounting of a monumental head of Janus on the upper arcade of the nave (fig. 33) and the posting of several inscriptions linked to Jacopo da Varagine’s different Janus-founders along the nave arcades (fig. 32).²⁵ These inscriptions and the repetition of Jacopo’s claims by a number of non-Genoese writers of the fourteenth century—such as Petrarch, who notes “they hold the creator of their city and its name to be Janus, who (as some believe) was the first king of Italy”—confirm that the Janus foundation legend was widely disseminated.²⁶ In 1375 the name Janus was even given to the eldest son of King James I of Cyprus, who was born while his parents were captives in Genoa.

Of these three symbols, therefore, the story behind the figure of Janus is more involved than Genoa’s connections to the griffin or the monumental gate, although Janus the mythical founder and the gate share an etymological connection through the word *ianua*. The figure of Janus emerged later in the city’s history, however, and as I have argued elsewhere, it served a different purpose.²⁷ While the gate and the griffin were both adopted in relatively stable circumstances during the early years of the commune, the figure of Janus was chiefly promulgated during a period of difficult factionalism at the end of the thirteenth century, when the message Janus’s story conveyed about the city’s noble, ancient, and cohesive origins was badly needed. Each symbol thus stressed different aspects of the community’s strengths to those who encountered it: the griffin, dominance and ferocity; the gate, trade, security, and strong defenses; and Janus, the city’s shared ancient origins.

Civic Institutions

The symbols discussed so far were all adopted and promulgated in more or less official contexts: the content and appearance of coins, seals, public inscriptions, and cathedral renovations were all overseen by communal officials.

24 Di Fabio, “Mito”; Petti Balbi, “Mito cittadino,” 320, and “Genova,” 138. See also chap. 11, pp. 328–9.

25 *CGM*, 222–53, 258–63, 280; Gerevini, “Written in Stone”; Beneš, *Urban Legends*, 78–82.

26 Petrarch, *Guide* 2.1, ed. Cachey, fol. 3v; also *GM*, 80–1. On the doubts expressed by Petrarch as to the veracity of these claims and their sometimes caustic dismissal by other authors, see discussion below.

27 Beneš, *Urban Legends*, 62–87.

Similar identity-building, however, is visible in the more abstract institutional, legal, and bureaucratic developments of the period. The formation of the commune, the city's numerous naval victories, and its negotiation of legal privileges and trade agreements all refined its inhabitants' sense of what it meant to be Genoese; that the commune established an official archive to document the details reflects its awareness of their importance in both intramural and extramural realms.

Legal and historiographical records therefore complemented the commune's more visual decisions: first, they ordered the compilation of the city's most important official documents into the *Libri iurium* (literally, books of laws).²⁸ This compilation most likely began in the early twelfth century, as only two documents predate 1128, but later volumes are quite detailed, including communal acts and decrees as well as treaties, papal bulls, and imperial and royal charters of privileges. Viewed as a whole, the *Libri iurium* define the legal rights and privileges of the Genoese. This was an important task, since the legal definition of "Genoese" was complex, and many people who were not Genoese natives or residents could claim its protections: for example, the 1343 decree of the *Officium Gazarie* (the Genoese board of trade) notes that its provisions apply to "any person from the city of Genoa or its *districtus*, or from any part of the Genoese Rivas, or who is called Genoese or ruled by the Genoese, or who enjoys any immunities, privileges, or benefits of the Genoese, of whatever condition or status he might be."²⁹ The definition of "Genoese" therefore varied by circumstance: in Ligurian surroundings, a merchant of Savona would certainly object to being called "Genoese"; yet in the city's eastern colonies (as the decree makes clear), that same merchant could expect the full protection of the Genoese administration. The complexity and variability of these relationships—not to mention the farflung distribution of people who could claim communal privileges—encouraged legal clarity and documentation, both with regard to what the commune could claim on behalf of the city, and what others could expect from the commune.

Paralleling the legal accumulation of the *Libri iurium*, through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the commune of Genoa sponsored the compilation of an official historiography, the civic annals.³⁰ These were begun by Caffaro around 1100 as a personal memoir of the exploits of the Genoese in the First Crusade, but in the 1150s the commune ordered the work officially continued

28 On these, see the discussion in chap. 1, pp. 39–42.

29 *Imposicio*, col. 372. I am grateful to Jeffrey Miner for a helpful discussion of this point. See also the discussions in chaps. 17, pp. 478–9, and 18, p. 498.

30 Edited as *AGC*; generally, Dotson, "Genoese Annals." Again, see the general discussion in chap. 1, pp. 37–9. On the consuls as guardians of civic harmony: chap. 4, p. 105.

and preserved in the civic archive. Even in its earliest sections, the work is distinguished by Caffaro's insistence on its collective purpose: to celebrate the Genoese as a united body rather than any particular citizen or set of citizens.³¹ After Caffaro's death, the civic annals were maintained continuously through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by a series of communal scribes—some more capable than others—until the practice came to an end in 1293 with the contribution of communal archivist Jacopo Doria.³² It is unknown why no annalist was appointed to succeed him, but the annals themselves were clearly still valued by the commune and the community: the official copies submitted by each annalist were maintained by the commune and available for consultation by later historians, for example by Jacopo da Varagine in the later 1290s and Giorgio Stella in the early fifteenth century.³³ While less public than the civic coinage, such official compilations of Genoese law and history were no less influential in shaping a peculiarly Genoese sense of identity, since they established and celebrated its citizens' rights and privileges vis-à-vis non-Genoese groups and political bodies, from the neighboring cities of Liguria to the German and Byzantine empires. The establishment of the archive also gave self-sustainability to its definitions and narratives—its existence assisted later scholars in their researches, and their works in turn legitimized and corroborated its claims to preserve the authoritative version of the Genoese past.

The commune's efforts to define and preserve the elements of Genoese identity within Genoa only represent one side of the coin, however. As the scope of Genoese activity throughout Liguria and the Mediterranean increased, symbols, definitions, and ideas of "Genoa" were necessarily disseminated beyond the city walls onto the broad and cosmopolitan stage on which the medieval citizens of Genoa moved: in the neighboring regions of Lombardy and Tuscany, in cities such as Venice and Pisa that were Genoa's chief economic rivals, and in Genoese territories across the Mediterranean. Ideas and redefinitions of civic identity played a crucial role in the imposition of Genoese hegemony—both communal and ecclesiastical—along the Rivas, and in Sardinia and Corsica.³⁴ For example, as Genoese hegemony grew, a large number of churches and altars along the Rivas and in Genoa's eastern outposts were dedicated to Genoa's patron saints Lawrence, George, and John the Baptist (for example, the church of Saint John the Baptist in Caffa, fig. 80).

31 "... that the victories of the men of Genoa should be known," *AGC* (preface), 1.4. See Dotson, "Caffaro, Crusade"; Petti Balbi, "Mito cittadino," 312–3.

32 Petti Balbi, *Caffaro*.

33 Jacopo's *Historia* (*JVC*) and *Legenda*, and Giorgio Stella's *Annales* (*AG*).

34 Discussed at length in chap. 2.

Similarly, the chief churches of the Genoese merchant communities in Acre, Tyre and Famagusta—all in the Near East—were dedicated to Saint Lawrence, an homage to and a reminder of the cathedral of San Lorenzo in Genoa. The *Libri iurium* record how dependent cities were obligated to donate annually a certain number of candles to the Genoese cathedral of San Lorenzo “to the honor of their mother church and the city of Genoa.”³⁵ The ritual underscored their dependence on Genoa and its saints: the necessity of appointing a delegation to travel to Genoa each year to present the donation reinforced the hierarchy the agreement established, and the candles thus acted as signs of both religious devotion and political tribute. Symbols of Genoese identity thus reinforced and made manifest the hierarchical relationship between Genoa (specifically, its commune and/or archbishopric) and its subject territories.

They also represented the ties binding communities of Genoese expatriates to their home city. True to their merchant roots, the Genoese maintained communities or neighborhoods (often called *nationes*) in virtually all the major trade hubs of the period, from the Baltic to the Black Sea. These were often subject to Genoese law and run by officials (often called consuls) appointed by the commune at home. The commune and its officials sponsored local projects and amenities—not only those related to trade, such as the construction of warehouses, but also churches, baths, and other community buildings. As the local representative of a sovereign body—much like a consulate today—they employed recognizable Genoese symbols to identify themselves and solidify their communities. This included the use of images connected to the home city, such as the griffin, and the celebration of Genoese festivals and saints.³⁶ Often quoted in this respect is the verse of the poet known as the Anonymous Genoese, writing at the end of the fourteenth century:

And so many are the Genoese
And so spread out throughout the world
That wherever they go and stay
They make another Genoa.³⁷

Symbolism, law, custom, and public spending all worked together to make the links between the home city and its outposts—the “other Genoas” of the anonymous poet—universally recognizable as Genoese.

35 *LI* 1.3, 238; see also 1.3, 42. On the cathedral as a civic institution, see discussion at *CGM*, 191.

36 Bascapé, *Sigillografia*, 1.249, fig. 7, and 1.259–60, esp. n. 33.

37 Anonimo genovese, *Poesie*, 560; discussion in *G&G*, 166.

Religious Identities

As the preceding discussion demonstrates, the political relationships between Genoa and its dominions were often reinforced by religious practices like altar dedications or annual pledges. Civic identity was therefore the collaborative result of secular communal traditions and the customs and cult-objects of the medieval Genoese church. The Genoese believed that they maintained a unique commitment to Christianity and to the Roman church. In his *Chronicle*, Jacopo da Varagine claims explicitly that Genoa “was the first city of Italy, or one of the first, in which the faith of Christ was publicly preached and publicly received” and that “the city of Genoa has held undiminished to the purity of the faith and protected it honorably.”³⁸ In making these claims, Jacopo compares Genoa favorably against other well-known cities of northern Italy, such as Milan, that adopted the faith “much later.” (Here Jacopo is contesting Milan’s fame as one of the great centers of early Christianity, a claim that not coincidentally justifies Genoa’s 1133 emancipation from the archbishopric of Milan.)

Medieval Genoa’s sense of Christian identity generally derived from two sources: first, a long tradition of local early Christian saints, bishops, and martyrs, whose legends were well-known and whose relics were preserved and venerated in local churches. These included native early bishops Syrus and Romulus, the martyrs Nazarius and Celsus, and the Venerable Bede, among others.³⁹ The connection of these saints to the early Genoese church, the physical presence of their relics, and the local places and landmarks featured in their legends all contributed to a belief by the Genoese in the exceptional righteousness and zeal of their city and people, and encouraged a sense of unity defined by the local diocese. This sense of self-importance only increased in 1133 when Innocent II (1130–43) raised the bishopric of Genoa to an archbishopric and assigned to it numerous suffragan bishoprics in Liguria, as well as several others on Corsica previously subject to Genoa’s archrival Pisa.

The second source of a specifically religious Genoese identity derived from the city’s maritime expertise: specifically, an identity based on confronting and defeating the Muslim “infidel.” Beginning with the joint Pisan-Genoese

38 Jacopo da Varagine, *Historia* 4.2, JVC 2.67. See also chap. 12, pp. 345–51, on the church as a unifying force.

39 *GMCI*, 169; on the discovery of Saint Syrus’ relics, *AGC* for 1188, 2.28, and Hall/Phillips, 147. The tomb venerated as that of the Venerable Bede was that of another monk with the name Bede, but it was commonly attributed by the thirteenth century to the more famous English monk; Jacopo, *Historia* 11.5, JVC 2.255–7.

campaign against Mahdia in 1087⁴⁰, this culminated in the substantial Genoese contribution to the success of the First Crusade—an event which spurred the creation of the civic annals by Caffaro, one of its participants. The city's military and logistical support of the church, especially in crusading efforts⁴¹, then became a pillar of Genoese identity, a phenomenon advertised and concentrated by the numerous relics brought back from these campaigns. One major result was the establishment of the cult of Saint John the Baptist, whose supposed ashes came from the Holy Land to Genoa as spoils of the First Crusade. The cathedral of San Lorenzo was also decorated with numerous Muslim artifacts from Genoese campaigns in Spain and North Africa.⁴² One, known as the *Sacro Catino* (fig. 46; probably a product of the early Islamic period) was thought to be the Holy Grail; another was identified as the plate on which Salome presented the head of John the Baptist to Herod (fig. 45).⁴³ These prizes of the cathedral treasury attested both the city's religious zeal in undertaking such campaigns and the divine favor apparent by their success. Genoa's civic piety thus rested on a reassuring combination: evidence of local early Christian cults that sanctified the local landscape, and a collection of flashier relics attesting Genoa's contemporary activities on behalf of Mother Church.

Another major result of Genoa's involvement in the First Crusade was the growth of the cult of Saint George, whose cross (red on white) still forms the civic coat of arms today. The saint had been venerated in the city since at least 964, but by the twelfth century San Giorgio was one of the most important churches in the city, and by the end of that century George was well established as the patron of Genoese military ventures.⁴⁴ While the rise of his cult is clearly connected to Genoa's participation in the First Crusade, and contemporary sources attest to the veneration of Saint George by the crusading army, none specifically connects George to the siege and capture of Jerusalem. Crusade accounts that explicitly link George to the Genoese—such as the one in Jacopo da Varagine's *Golden Legend*⁴⁵—all significantly postdate the 1099 campaign.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, the city annals attest the use of a “standard of Saint

40 Cowdrey, “Mahdia Campaign”; also discussed in chap. 16, pp. 464–5.

41 Cf. chap. 17 of this volume.

42 See discussion in chap. 10, pp. 296–9.

43 Calcagno, “Sacro Catino.”

44 Grosso, *San Giorgio*, 218; *UCP*, 45–7; *GMCI*, 143.

45 Jacopo's account of the vision of Saint George seems to derive from, but contains many more details than, the account of Raymond of Aguilers; see also the more moderate version at *AGC* for 1101, 1.11.

46 *LA* 1.391–8, at 398; in English, *GL*, 238–42, at 242.

George" from at least 1198, which is described both as the simple Saint George cross and the image of a mounted George attacking a dragon.⁴⁷ This standard was kept in the church of San Giorgio along with other military insignia and spoils of war; San Giorgio thus became a focal point of civic memory emphasizing Genoese military achievement, and Saint George one of the city's chief patrons.⁴⁸ In 1379, for example, in thanksgiving for the Genoese victory over the Venetians at Pola, the commune declared that a gold *pallium* would be presented in San Giorgio every year on May 6.⁴⁹ Likewise, at the beginning of his early-fifteenth-century *Genoese Annals*, Giorgio Stella invokes "the holy martyr and triumphant soldier, blessed George, standard-bearer of the Genoese."⁵⁰

Perhaps paradoxically, in later years the church of San Giorgio's position as the center of a civic cult faded as Genoa's general connection to Saint George spread; the church went unrestored after major damage in the later fourteenth century, was unusable by the mid-fifteenth century, and was not refurbished until its takeover by the Theatine order in the mid-seventeenth century.⁵¹ Yet during these same years in which the church was allowed to deteriorate—the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—the Genoese established and built up the communal Bank of San Giorgio.⁵² Located in the Palazzo San Giorgio, the communal palace built by Guglielmo Boccanegra in 1260 (figs. 52 and 54), the Bank of San Giorgio made Saint George and his banner an instantly recognizable symbol of Genoa and its bankers across late medieval and early modern Europe; largely for this reason, George's banner still flies over the city today.⁵³

The Civic Cult of John the Baptist

While George has lasted longer as a patron saint of Genoa, his medieval cult was always associated specifically with the city's military exploits, and (as discussed above) his cult declined in popularity in the late Middle Ages. During that time, attention shifted to John the Baptist as the city's most important

47 *Vexillum beati Georgii*: AGC for 1198, 2.76; but see also annals for 1234, 1241–3 (AGC 3.71, 109, 116, 127–9, 134, 146–7, and illustration between pp. 16 and 17); 1255 (AGC 4.18); and 1282 (AGC 5.25). Cf. also Grosso, *San Giorgio*, 219.

48 Grosso, *San Giorgio*, 218; GMCI, 163–4.

49 AG, 174; Cambiaso, *L'anno ecclesiastico*, 157.

50 AG, 1.

51 Poleggi/Croce, *Ritratto*, 193–4.

52 GMCI, 183; G&G, 260–61; GXV, 96–151.

53 See the works cited in chaps. 14 and 15 of this volume.

patron. Like the cult of Saint George, the Baptist's cult was associated with spoils of the First Crusade; unlike it, there does not seem to have been much of a pre-existing cult in Genoa before the arrival of his relics with returning crusaders. While Caffaro (somewhat oddly) does not mention this feature of the crusade, the material evidence and later narrative sources suggest that the relics did arrive around that time, and that Saint John's cult grew steadily in Genoa through the later Middle Ages—to the point that the churches of the Genoese communities in Caffa (1348; fig. 80) and Rome (1481) were both dedicated to the Baptist rather than to Lawrence or George.⁵⁴

According to Jacopo da Varagine, the Genoese crusaders who originally acquired the Baptist's relics stopped at Myra on their way home. While they had hoped to make off with the relics of Saint Nicholas, these had already been stolen in 1087 by a prior group of Italians on their way home to Bari, so the disappointed Genoese grabbed a marble urn which—under duress—the custodial monks admitted held the ashes of the Baptist. Bringing the urn home with them, the crusaders presented it to San Lorenzo in 1099.⁵⁵

The cathedral quickly found ways to accommodate and feature its new prize: the north portal and the small piazza outside it (fig. 30) were both dedicated to the Baptist around 1130, while an altar to Saint John was placed inside on the north wall of the chancel. The relics' earliest reliquary (still extant) is local metalwork of the twelfth century (fig. 49).⁵⁶ The saint's altar became a full-fledged chapel in the early thirteenth century with a much larger marble reliquary (1225) and new lamps donated by Innocent IV (1244); eventually, in the fifteenth century, the chapel and chancel were completely redesigned to accommodate the chapel's further expansion (figs. 34–5).⁵⁷ Thus both the gradual expansion of the space allotted to the saint's cult in the cathedral, and the resources attached to outfitting and maintaining his shrine manifest the growth and importance of his cult in later medieval Genoa.

The institutional and social evidence for this expansion parallels the material evidence. Since other churches claimed to hold relics of the Baptist, and

54 Kouma/Paganelli, *San Giovanni*, 7–13. On the Baptist's cult in Genoa, see also chaps. 9, pp. 229–30, and 12, pp. 348–51.

55 Jacopo, *Legenda*, 485. While Jacopo gives 1099 as the date of this presentation, some scholars have surmised that an arrival date in 1101 or 1102 is more likely: Polonio, "L'arrivo."

56 *CGM*, 183 and fig. 86. This reliquary was described in 1287 by Rabban Sauma, a visiting Syriac monk: *GM*, 74–5.

57 *CGM*, 183–4 and figs. 74–7.

numerous Italian cities (notably Florence⁵⁸) claimed him as a patron saint, the anxious Genoese sought papal confirmation and support for their new acquisition at the Third Lateran Council:

In the year of the Lord 1179 ... [a Genoese delegation led by archbishop Ugo] made full oath and offered sufficient proof to the lord pope and the cardinals that the relics of Saint John the Baptist had been transported to Genoa from Myra. As a result of this the pope established and approved that the body of Saint John the Baptist was held in the city of Genoa, ordering that this revelation should be solemnly celebrated.⁵⁹

These concessions were reconfirmed in 1244 by Pope Innocent IV (the Genoese Sinibaldo Fieschi, 1243–54).⁶⁰ Papal support therefore both confirmed the legitimacy of the Genoese relics and encouraged the cult of the Baptist in Genoa; this promoted Saint John's shrine as a site of pilgrimage, enhanced the city's prestige among its urban peers, and fostered local citizens' piety and civic pride, encouraging them to imagine a direct link between their city, its saintly patron, and divine favor.

With communal and papal support, the Baptist's cult spread well beyond his shrine and into the general population. Numerous churches, chapels, and altars were dedicated to him: within the walls of Genoa, across Liguria, and in Genoese territories from the Riviera to the Near East.⁶¹ The late thirteenth century seems to have been a high point, probably due to the promotional efforts of archbishop Jacopo da Varagine, who included accounts of the relics and their acquisition in no fewer than three of his works: the *Golden Legend* (written in the 1260s), the *Chronicle of Genoa* (written in the 1290s), and the *History of the Translation of the Relics of John the Baptist* (of uncertain date). Jacopo's influence as archbishop and the wide dissemination of his accounts of the Baptist and his cult in Genoa probably inspired the two events that cemented the saint's prominence in Genoese religious practice and civic life. The first of these was the founding of the Confraternity of the Blessed Precursor

58 While the Baptist's status as patron saint of Florence is of fairly early date—the baptistery dedicated to him was consecrated in 1059, and the saint appears on the earliest florins, minted in 1250—Florence does not seem to have held any of the saint's relics until 1393; Chrétien, *San Giovanni*, 15–30.

59 Jacopo, *Historia* 12.2, JVC 2.355–6, and *Legenda*, 489, working from AGC for 1179, 2.12–13.

60 Innocent IV, encyclical letter of 4 August 1244; Potthast, *Regesta*, 1.11449. Jacopo's *Legenda* loosely paraphrases the text of this letter (489).

61 UCP; see also fig. 80.

(*Confraternità del Santo Precursore*), an influential lay group attached to the cathedral that promoted John the Baptist's cult by fostering local devotion and maintaining the saint's shrine.⁶² Secondly, the Baptist's official prominence was assured in 1327 when the commune formally recognized him as "patron, protector, and father of the city."⁶³

By the fifteenth century, as the annals of Giorgio Stella attest, the Baptist's relics were a focal point of major civic events, from ceremonial entries to the annual celebrations of John's own feast on 24 June, when his relics were processed through the city and down to the waterfront, where they were presented to the sea.⁶⁴ They were credited with converting criminals, healing the sick, preserving the city from earthquakes, calming storms, and saving Genoese sailors from shipwreck.⁶⁵ They also played a major role in confirming formal agreements such as peace pacts meant to resolve the city's regular outbreaks of factional violence.⁶⁶ Extensive renovations to the Baptist's shrine in the cathedral of San Lorenzo (ca. 1430–55), the creation of a new reliquary (completed 1438–45), the addition of the feast of the saint's martyrdom to Genoa's liturgical calendar (1463), and the acquisition of further relics associated with the saint (1492) all contributed to the saint's continuing material presence in the city.⁶⁷

62 CGM, 185, and Calcagnino, *Historia*, 110–17. In fact, Garnett and Rosser argue that the confraternity became so closely associated with the "heavy hand of the state" that in later years the rest of the population began to turn away from the Baptist's patronage toward different, more "accessible" saints, and had to be coaxed back to observance of his feast; "Virgin Mary," 285–6.

63 CGM, 191, and Calcagnino, *Historia*, 124.

64 AG, 206, 259, 280, 340; Polonio, "L'arrivo," 4.

65 Criminals: Jacopo, *Historia* 12.4, JVC 2.375–6, and AG, 18; healing: Jacopo, *Legenda*, 488; earthquakes of 1222 and 1245: AGC 2.187 and 3.165, and AG 54; shipwreck: AGC 2.144; storms of 1245, 1391, 1396, 1406, 1414: Calcagnino, *Historia*, 126–7, 142–4, 148–9; AG, 278 (1406) and 318 (1414); and Nicolo della Porta, *Historia translationis*. The relics' connection to successful seafaring and civic unity derive from a story about their voyage from Myra, which recounts that the Genoese crusaders attempted to divide the relics among a number of ships for the voyage home, but that storms prevented the ships from moving until a chaplain's revelation that "they could not be saved unless they reunited into one the sacred relics which they had thus divided ... When these had been collected back into one, they sailed straight back and entered the port of Genoa successfully with great joy"; Jacopo, *Legenda*, 485.

66 AG, 88–9, on the role of the relics in the peace accord of 1319. See also AGC for 1169, 1.217.

67 Kruft, "Cappella," and Risløw, *Doorways*, especially 50–55; also CGM, 182–5, on the thirteenth century.

The Baptist became a focus of Genoese collective identity, responsible for the prosperity of the city and its community, while his cult became a performative manifestation of that identity. It united numerous disparate elements of the Genoese population: people, commune, archbishop, cathedral chapter, and finally John's own confraternity. The Baptist's cult therefore reflects the collaborative efforts toward the general benefit of Genoa's ecclesiastical and lay authorities, official institutions and individual citizens.

Furthermore, the role that John's cult played in the formation and expression of the city's self-image reflects the reciprocal relationships of local places, images, and objects with the meanings assigned to them in the process of Genoese identity formation. The places associated with local saints like Syrus and the objects associated with George and John the Baptist all contributed a powerful sense of authenticity to their legends; the stories told about them and the claims made for their special relationships with the city gave uniqueness and sacrality to the landscapes through which moved Genoese and non-Genoese alike. At the same time, different saints served different purposes and sub-populations—so that Syrus became the special protector of the bishop and the diocese while George oversaw the city's military exploits and John the Baptist its official institutions. In this way Genoa's patron saints formed a divine pantheon to guard and advocate for the city and its people.⁶⁸

Successes & Failures

As demonstrated above, the various symbols (gate, griffin, Janus), media (sculpture, annals, relics) and figures (Janus, Syrus, George, Lawrence, John the Baptist) that Genoa's communal and ecclesiastical elites invoked to characterize "Genoese identity" and promote civic unity were widely disseminated throughout Genoa's dominions—from the griffin on Genoese seals to the many churches around the Mediterranean dedicated to its patron saints. References in works written by non-Genoese writers suggest that these associations were well known outside Genoa.⁶⁹ Numerous historians of the period accepted the claims of Jacopo da Varagine and the city's official annalists regarding their city's origins at face value. Concurring with the Genoese authors in relying on authoritative texts such as Isidore and Macrobius, Guglielmo da Pastrengo (a Paduan), Riccobaldo da Ferrara, and Armannino Giudice (a native of Fabriano) all simply repeat the Virgilian trope that Janus founded *Ianua*,

68 Webb, *Patrons and Defenders*, chap. 4, especially 135–9.

69 See the numerous examples in *GM*.

which they uncomplicatedly understand to refer to Genoa.⁷⁰ The city's attempts to frame and promulgate a distinct Genoese identity must therefore on some level be regarded as successful.

Yet not all contemporary scholars accepted Genoa's claims and evidence: in his own universal chronicle, written about twenty years after Jacopo da Varagine's *Chronicle of Genoa*, the Milanese chancellor Benzo d'Alessandria skewered Jacopo's claims for the early history of Genoa. Where Jacopo's history and the early fourteenth-century renovations of the nave of San Lorenzo had celebrated a Trojan Janus as founder of the city, Benzo comments that "I have found nothing in any authoritative writings of the city being either built or expanded by a Trojan Janus." Furthermore, he continues, since the Roman historian Livy always refers to the city as *Genua*, "it appears that the ancient city was called *Genua* rather than *Ianua*, and thus it was neither founded by nor named after Janus, even if it is known as *Ianua* today."⁷¹ In a similar vein, the fourteenth-century travelogue of John Mandeville signals the presence of John the Baptist's relics and cult at Genoa while disparaging the Genoese as a people: the author's remarks imply that the Genoese are less devoted to the saint than they are proud of the earthly prestige the relics bring to their city.⁷² The cohesive, divinely-favored community envisioned and advertised by Genoa's civic leaders thus did not go entirely unchallenged by non-Genoese hearers. In fact, later humanists such as Coluccio Salutati and Biondo Flavio developed Benzo's earlier critique of the Janus myth; in his *Italia illustrata* (written 1448–58), Biondo notes: "we reject as absurd the fictitious nonsense regarding Janus; indeed, we observe that there is no mention of this city anywhere before the time of the Punic Wars."⁷³ Perhaps in response to these doubts, the local chronicler Giorgio Stella (who used the Livian variant *Genua* for his *Annales Genuenses*) used Boccaccio's *Genealogy of the Pagan Gods* to suggest a foundation and derivation from an alternative mythological hero named Genuinus.⁷⁴

The broader challenge facing communal or ecclesiastical attempts to create a sense of civic unity, however, seems to have come from the Genoese themselves. The significant damage done by endemic factionalism is a trope in the city's historiography—Epstein's *Genoa and the Genoese* includes an appendix

70 Beneš, "Noble and Ancient"; Bouloux, "Etymologie."

71 Benzo d'Alessandria, *Chronicon* 14.155, ed. Berrigan, "Benzo," 187; Beneš, "Noble and Ancient," 9–10.

72 *Book of John Mandeville* 12, ed. Higgins, 66; Grossi, "Imaging Genoa," 405–6.

73 Biondo, *Italy* 2.1.24, 1.30–31; Petti Balbi, *Caffaro*, 86–91.

74 Stella, *AG*, 10–11, working from Boccaccio, *Genealogy* 7.41; Petti Balbi, "Mito cittadino," 321–2.

listing every change of government between 1257 and 1528⁷⁵—while urban and architectural historians have created an entire subfield out of studying the *alberghi*, or neighborhood confederacies, into which those living in the city center divided themselves. One difficulty facing historians who have tried to analyze these divisions has been their multifaceted and inconsistent nature—some of the divisions are attributable to Guelf vs. Ghibelline alliances (that is, through rival families and factions allying themselves with papal or imperial parties), but some seem to have emerged from more intramural concerns—for example, tension between *arriviste* noble families based in the city center and more established ones grounded in seigneurial estates along the Ligurian coast.⁷⁶ These dynamics also tied into conflicts between communal and ecclesiastical authorities, and sometimes even within those institutions—for examples, between magistrates and councils, or between the archbishop and his cathedral chapter—since the Genoese nobility tended to entrench themselves in such offices, and draw them into their broader politicking.⁷⁷ Such divisions affected the ability of the Genoese to formulate, maintain, and promulgate an image of harmonious community. Both Jacopo da Varagine, writing in the 1290s after a major episode of factional rioting, and Giorgio Stella, writing in the early fifteenth century after nearly a century of foreign rule originally invited to quell intramural conflict, blame family affiliation and factionalism for a decline in Genoese communal identity—and by association, in the city's fortunes.⁷⁸

In other cities, the triumph of personal over communal loyalties is often visible in changes to symbolism and mythography, where (for example) communal foundation legends of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries give way in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to family foundation legends.⁷⁹ Yet in medieval Genoa, the greatest impediment to an enduring sense of civic unity was not competition from alternative forms of myth-making; rather, it was lack of interest in myth-making at all. In other words, adherence to a sense of Genoese communal identity was not defeated by more persuasive claims mounted

75 G&G, 325–7.

76 Shaw, “Libertà,” esp. 180–81.

77 Polonio, “Universalismo,” esp. 13.

78 Jacopo, *Historia* 12.8 (JDV, 2.411–12); AG, 218; Petti Balbi, “Mito cittadino,” 322. On factional divisions, see chap. 5 of this volume.

79 For example, the fanciful genealogies of the Este family (Looney/Shemek, *Phaethon's Children*, esp. chapters by Bruscaagli and Dean) or the classical roots claimed by the aristocratic families of early modern Rome (Christian, *Empire without End*, 63–89); Petti Balbi, “Mito cittadino,” 326. This phenomenon resurfaces in sixteenth-century Genoa, centering around the figure of Andrea Doria: Gorse, “Classical Stage,” Borniotto, “Gloria civica,” and the works cited in the latter.

by other groups; instead, it was defeated by the individualism for which the Genoese were already renowned, which did not require the cultivation of such mechanisms of group coherence.⁸⁰ These centripetal trends are especially visible in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, within Genoa as well as in its colonies and trading communities across Europe and the Middle East.

A sense of distance from and waning loyalty to the home city are fairly easy to explain in the latter case: Eastern colonies such as Tyre, Pera-Galata, and Caffa (figs. 79–83) had always had a fairly ambivalent relationship with the commune back home. They had communally-appointed officials, but the dominant members of their communities usually operated independently: sometimes they themselves were exiles from Genoa; and in any case they were often accused or suspected of “going native”, placing personal or immediate priorities above the interests of the Genoese commune—sometimes even playing the commune off other local authorities, as in the case of merchants of fifteenth-century Pera who balanced the dictates of the home commune with the more immediate local patronage of the Ottomans.⁸¹ A similar situation seems to have pertained in Caffa: as political stability in Genoa deteriorated through the fourteenth century, Genoese authorities in Caffa increasingly operated according to their own needs and priorities, with a predictable reduction in their sense of loyalty and responsibility for the commune back home.

But official policies in Genoa itself also contributed to the weakening of these ties. For example, in the fifteenth century the ruling elite created private or semi-private institutions distinct from the commune itself to manage and administer Genoese overseas interests—such as the *Mahona* system and the Casa di San Giorgio.⁸² These arrangements decreased overseas communities’ reliance on and contact with the Genoese government, reducing their connection from official ties between two communities to a loose bundle of personal and business relationships. These shifts in policy reflect the “merchant libertarianism” common among the late medieval Genoese elite. According to this view, the purpose of the Genoese government was not to take the lead in advancing Genoese economic interests—for example by placing itself in charge of the city’s boatbuilding yards or organizing communally-sponsored trading voyages, as occurred regularly in Venice—but rather to protect the rights of Genoese citizens to go about their private business unmolested.⁸³

80 Petti Balbi, “Mito cittadino,” 325–6.

81 Caselli, “Genoese Merchants.”

82 Discussed in chap. 15, pp. 431–7.

83 Shaw, “Libertà”; Caselli, “Genoese Merchants.”

The community's relationships with its chosen symbols, myths, and foundation legends were therefore complex and dynamic rather than simplistic and unwavering. The period of greatest Genoese concern with issues of civic identity seems to have lasted from Caffaro at the end of the eleventh century to Jacopo da Varagine at the end of the thirteenth. This emphasis on civic and communal priorities began with the Genoese participation in the First Crusade and paralleled the development of the Genoese commune, its extension of authority over the region of Liguria, and the establishment of its overseas empire. Civic self-expression and image-formation must therefore be considered aspects of Genoa's communal development. Perhaps unsurprisingly, attempts to define and promote Genoese civic identity were fewer during the less stable fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when more immediate concerns and alternate priorities seem to have taken precedence.

Moreover, Genoese efforts to define and articulate civic identity show diversity but also inconsistent application. Most of them fall into two categories: first, the textual, such as the maintenance of the official annals, the *Libri iurium*, hagiographies, or histories such as those by Jacopo da Varagine and Giorgio Stella—and second, the religious, a category encompassing both material culture (architecture, sculpture, art, and other material expressions of religious devotion) and performance (rituals such as processions). Beyond the fairly limited symbolism found on the civic seal and coinage, however, there seem to have been few large-scale communal or lay attempts to promulgate particular symbols or legends along the lines of the major public-works projects and large-scale programs seen in other Italian cities in the same period.⁸⁴ The form of these efforts—coming as they did chiefly from the highest echelons of the commune, the ecclesiastical bureaucracy, or both working together—also suggests that Genoese civic identity was largely a concern and a creation of the city's ruling elites (both lay and clerical), promoted by them as a top-down initiative. For good or ill, this seems to have linked the success or failure of Genoese efforts at civic identity to the success or failure of the regimes that sponsored them. In the late Middle Ages, for example, the relative weakness of the Genoese government seems to have resulted in not only waning loyalty to the commune by regional elites and outposts across the Mediterranean, but also—by extension—their lack of enthusiasm for the symbols, images, and narratives of that regime.

For this reason, we might characterize medieval Genoa as a victim of its own success. The same initiative and determination that created the commune and other expressions of a unified community in the late eleventh century

84 Beneš, *Urban Legends*, esp. 170–71.

may have led to the fragmentation of that community and the prioritization of personal concerns in the changed environment of the later Middle Ages. Expressions of civic identity and communal mythography served an important purpose in the former situation, but were less convincing in the latter: the changing circumstances affected the nature of civic identity as a concept as well as its practical utility. Furthermore, these dynamics demonstrate the complexity of civic identity as a social phenomenon. Civic identity is often assumed to be a top-down process, but Genoa's struggles with its own self-image and sense of collective identity—including challenges from neighbors in the region, apathy from the city's colonies, even indifference from its own citizens—reveal both the intricacy of these dynamics and the limitations of the top-down approach.

More specifically, they demonstrate a practical problem faced by communal rhetoricians across medieval Italy, namely, that the common good is much more palatable as a social ideal when it accords with personal advantage. Genoa's highly competitive commercial culture meant that even more than in most places, and even in Caffaro's day, Genoese civic identity was predicated on individual benefit. If the Genoese could reap fame and fortune from a communal campaign on behalf of the crusade, so much the better for all involved. However, unity and concord were desirable not on philosophical grounds, for the benefit of some nebulous "common good," but specifically as and when they enabled Genoa's citizens to achieve their own ends. In this sense Epstein's titular "Genoa and the Genoese" is an apt formulation, since it encourages us to recognize that the goals and priorities of "Genoa" did not always accord with those of the Genoese.

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Architecture and Urban Topography

George L. Gorse

The city ... does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lightning rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls.

ITALO CALVINO, *Invisible Cities*¹



Portolan (navigational) maps of the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries (fig. 1) highlight the importance of Genoa and Venice as archrival maritime cities, setting up a visual *axis mundi*, a dialogue and competition between two leading characters on a stage, bridging relations and identities between north and south, east and west.² Characteristically, Genoa (*La Superba*, the Proud) is a closed and austere “vertical city,” with towers and mountains ascending from triumphal framing lighthouses (the *Lanterne*) and open harbor market arcades in a natural crescent to patron saints’ churches crowded inside protective city walls—a “sacred maritime theater.”³ By contrast, Venice (*La Serenissima*, the Most Serene Republic) is itself the theater, an open stage of public spaces with paired victory columns, sumptuous façades, and colorful displays of marble

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- 1 Calvino, 11. I thank Carrie Beneš, editor of this volume, and the other contributors for their guidance. The Pomona College Research Committee gave financial support. Clario Di Fabio offered scholarly insights along with other Genoese colleagues and friends. As always, Naomi Sawelson-Gorse provided advice and support. This article is dedicated to the memory of two great Mediterranean scholars: Olivia Remie Constable and Juergen Schulz.
 - 2 Harley/Woodward, *History of Cartography*; for Jacopo Russo’s *Atlante Nautico* (before 1521), Cavallo, *Cristoforo Colombo*, 289–91. Compare this to urban views and descriptions in the biblical “world chronicles,” most notably Hartmann Schedel’s *Nuremberg Chronicle* of 1493, plates 44 (Venice) and 59 (Genoa): Wilson, *Nuremberg Chronicle*, 63–162; or the placement of Genoa and Venice in the Gallery of Maps in the Vatican Cortile del Belvedere (1572–85), literally a “processional pilgrimage through Italy”: Fiorani, *Marvels of Maps*, 171–86.
 - 3 Poggi/Cevini, *Genova*; also *UCP*.

and mosaic—a “horizontal city” of domed churches and bell towers on a radiant island lagoon.⁴ A “gendering of space” takes place in these maps, with the two cities as cultural compass points in a magnetic field, each constructing rival notions of antiquity and precedence. Indeed, in the Middle Ages Genoa and Venice became the obverse twin port cities of northern Italy, “hinges” between Europe and the Mediterranean world. As Calvino’s great khan said to Marco Polo regarding map-making and cultural identity: “I think you recognize cities better on the atlas than when you visit them in person.”⁵

Petrarch portrayed the situation poignantly in a letter to Andrea Dandolo, doge of Venice, sometime after 1343:

I am moved indeed, O illustrious doge ... At present two powerful peoples are taking up arms, two flourishing cities or, to put it briefly, two bright lights of Italy, which it seems to me Mother Nature has so strategically located on opposite sides of the approaches to the Ausonian [ancient Italian] land so that, with you in the north and east controlling the Adriatic and with them [the Genoese] in the south and west controlling the Tyrrhenian, the four corners of the earth would realize that Italy still is queen, even after the weakening and decline, or rather the prostration and destruction, of the Roman Empire.⁶

In 1597, as an expression of pride in its medieval past, Genoa commissioned—through the office of the *patres communis* (fathers of the commune, the magistrates in charge of urban planning and sanitation)—an “urban view of ancient Genoa” (*Antiquae urbis Genuae picturam*) in bird’s-eye perspective by Cristoforo de’ Grassi (fig. 2). De Grassi’s painting is based upon an earlier (unknown) view of the city in 1481, showing the fleet of Genoese papal admiral Cardinal Paolo di Campofregoso and Pope Sixtus IV della Rovere of Savona, returning in triumph after their naval victory over the Turks at Otranto.⁷ This

4 Schulz, “Jacopo de’ Barbari”; Muir, *Civic Ritual*; Brown, *Venice & Antiquity*; Howard, *Venice & the East*.

5 Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 137. For Calvino’s medieval inspiration, see the Venetian Marco Polo’s account of his overland travels to China (1270s), conveyed to the Pisan author Rustichello in a Genoese jail (the Palazzo San Giorgio) after capture by the Genoese at Curzola (1298), itself emblematic of these tightly interwoven Mediterranean and Asian histories.

6 Petrarch, *Fam.* 11.8 (ed. Bernardo, 2.102).

7 Poleggi, *Iconografia* 58, 110–12; Poleggi/Croce, *Ritratto*; Pastor, *History* 4.331–47. The inscription on the lower left of the painting reads: “The most excellent Fathers of the Commune ordered this picture—nearly consumed by the ravages of time—of the ancient city of Genoa to be fashioned in the year 1597, so that a representation of its ancient form could be preserved.”

retrospective crusading image of the late medieval port city allied with the church, rises up in Lombard Gothic triumphal magnificence to the enclosing mountains, flanked by the Bisagno and Polcevera river valleys to east and west, the predominant black and white marble striations of major churches and ancient noble family towers, overseen from above by the medieval fortress of Castelletto (ca. 952–1402) and city walls, and from below by the Lantern towers at the entrance to the inner harbor. Meanwhile, Genoese trading ships and the Fieschi squadron of war-galleys parade amidst cannon salutes, crowned by the civic insignia of the protective Saint George and belvedere villas with walled gardens overlooking the sea, described by one contemporary Florentine traveler as being like a great “labyrinth”—a Renaissance civic allegory of medieval Genoa.⁸

Urban Development

From the twelfth century, medieval Genoa was built by *maestri Antelami*, Lombard stone masons and sculptors from the Como, Lugano, and Maggiore lake district north of Milan, in the Val d’Intelvi quarries and workshops of the Alps, who formed a local guild and quasi-monopoly in Genoa on carving, measuring, construction and decoration.⁹ This “Lombard connection” was built right into the fabric and style of outward- and inward-looking medieval Genoa, as well as other dependent Ligurian port cities and villages, adapted to local building traditions and social conditions. The *maestri Antelami* worked with the *patres communis* in the rapid expansion of the port and city with a supporting infrastructure of roads, bridges, and aqueducts throughout Liguria during this formative period of medieval commercial expansion.¹⁰ As the region’s major port, “Lombard Genoa” scenically opened northern Italy to the Mediterranean (maps 3, 5, and 6).

Likewise, regional history and the “ancient origins” of medieval Genoa are inscribed in the urban plan (maps 6–7). Ancient *Genua* dates probably to the sixth century BC, contemporary with the Etruscan civilization of central Italy,

I thank Professor K.B. Wolf for this translation. On the lower right of the harbor landscape, beneath the hill of *Castrum*, place of civic origin, is the artist’s signature.

8 Giovanni Ridolfi, *Descrizione di Genova* (1480), in *GM*, 148–9.

9 Poleggi, “Rinnovamento”; see also discussion in chap. 10.

10 Poleggi/Cevini, *Genova*, 42, on the *salvatores portus et moduli* of 1270–81, from which the *patres communis* were formed in 1383–99, to build, maintain, and regulate the port, city, and surrounding countryside.

home to Ligurian warriors, traders, fishermen, farmers and shepherds.¹¹ The classical geographer Strabo mentions “Genua, the emporium of the *Ligures*,” indicating early maritime trade in this strategic harbor at the center of the Ligurian coast, settled by Ingauni and Intemelii tribes.¹² Likewise, Livy describes how during the Second Punic War (218–01 BC), Genoa was already allied with and controlled by the Romans.¹³ The Romans connected Genoa to Rome by extending the Via Aurelia up the west coast from Pisa to Marseille and the western provinces, while the Via Postumia (148 BC) drove northward through rugged Apennine mountain passes to Milan, the Po valley, and the eastern provinces—making Genoa a Roman crossroads by sea and land.

One can read these Ligurian and Roman cultures in Genoa’s early urban plan (maps 6–7), which parallels the Etruscan hill town of Fiesole and Roman grid city of Florentia in the Arno River valley to the south, *ca.* 80 BC.¹⁴ The oblong closed acropolis of the original Ligurian *castrum* (castle or fortified settlement) in the southern part of Genoa, which overlooks a small finger of land protecting the harbor (*Mandraccio*), contrasts with the open Roman *civitas* grid with *cardo* (north-south) and *decumanus* (east-west) streets directly on the harborfront, characteristic of Roman “new towns” and maritime cities.¹⁵ In spite of frequent Byzantine, Lombard, Frankish, and Saracen invasions and sacks from the sixth through tenth centuries, the Ligurian-Roman settlement expanded northward from this nucleus through radial curving streets, shops and markets along the waterfront, beginning as the medieval *burgus* of trading “faubourgs” (suburbs) but gradually enclosed within successive circuits of city walls. *Castrum*, *civitas*, and *burgus* thus represent three stages in Genoa’s urban and cultural development.

A succession of city walls served to defend and proclaim the *libertà* of the city: the earliest ninth-century walls were superseded in the twelfth century (1155–8) by walls erected in defense against Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa’s invasion of Lombardy; figs. 3–5 and map 6). In the fourteenth century (1320–40) extensions were added to reach the gates of San Tomaso in the west and to enclose the hill of Carignano in the east. The main eastern city gate from the Roman Via Aemilia Scauri, the Porta Soprana (fig. 4) looms over the remains of the monastery of Sant’Andrea just outside the wall (fig. 6). The gate soars vertically

11 Pileggi/Cevini, *Genova*, 15–21; UCP 25–49; G&G 9–95; Epstein/Gorse, “Genoa.” Cf. discussion in chap. 3, pp. 72–4.

12 Strabo, *Geography* 4.6.

13 Livy, *History of Rome* 21.32.

14 Barbieri, *Forma Genuae*, for successive urban forms; cf. Fanelli, *Firenze*.

15 Benevolo, *History*, chaps. 2–3; Kostof, *History*, chaps. 7–10.

with flanking medieval crenellated towers, a central Gothic arch, arched string-courses, and prominently-displayed civic inscriptions—a triumphal gate into the city.¹⁶ The main western gate, Porta dei Vacca (originally Porta di Santa Fede, fig. 3), gives a monumental entry into the *burgus*, framing the *civitas* port center within the twelfth-century wall system. Caffaro's annal for 1155 highlights the frantic communal building of these walls against Barbarossa—a defiant declaration of freedom, but also of civic control over local factionalism:

It should be noted by those present and future that these consuls managed the republic of the Genoese, as was appropriate, by augmenting it more and more. For, as much as the commune was bound by many pledges [taxes and tributes], that is to say of castles, ports, [customs] scales, weights, measures, money, and every other public income, these were redeemed in this service. And meanwhile they began to build the walls and gates of the city on both sides [east and west]. And not only did they maintain the peace among citizens, but outside in many places [rural feudal territories and foreign powers] there came about many great advantages.¹⁷

The Ecclesiastical City

In these three regions (map 7), three churches functioned as “co-cathedrals” and seats of the bishop (after 1133, the archbishop): first, Santa Maria di Castello (figs. 14–16) at the head of the Ligurian *castrum*, a palace-church-citadel on high ground; second, the cathedral of San Lorenzo (fig. 24) at the north edge of Roman *civitas* (characteristic of early Christian churches and the growing cult of martyred saints' relics);¹⁸ and third, San Siro, the city's first cathedral, dedicated to Saint Syrus, the first (fourth-century) “bishop patron saint” of Genoa, an ecclesiastical authority well out in the rural countryside of the *burgus*.

16 Poleggi/Cevini, *Genova*, 34–5; Profumo, *Porta Soprana*; Dufour Bozzo, *Porta urbana*. Naser Eslami (*Genova*, 34–8, 137–40) argues that the characteristic features of Genoese architecture were all influenced by Islamic trading cities, which, in turn, were part of ancient Roman Mediterranean traditions: Abulafia, *Mediterranean*; Constable, *Housing the Stranger*.

17 AGC for 1155, 1.41 (all translations mine unless otherwise indicated). On the annalistic tradition in Genoa, see chap. 1, pp. 37–9; on the crisis with Barbarossa, chaps. 8, pp. 195–6, and 12, p. 347.

18 Brown, *Cult of the Saints*.

Further, urban historian Ennio Poleggi has spoken of the pivotal role played by monastic churches and feudal lands in the development of Genoa, from the Benedictines and Cistercians early in the Middle Ages to the Dominicans and Franciscans of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹⁹

These churches crowned—that is, surrounded—the medieval city and they gradually developed the urban fabric of their local family neighborhoods: from archangel San Michele, weigher of souls and protector of the gates of heaven, to San Tomaso, the church of San Sepolcro and San Giovanni di Prè, pilgrimage church and hospice of the military order of the Hospitallers in the west, to San Francesco di Castelletto overlooking Genoa on the north and San Domenico, San Donato, Sant'Agostino, Sant'Andrea and Santo Stefano on the east and south—a city of saints. These monastic and collegiate churches, tied in hierarchy to the bishop's seats in the three main districts, performed (with many others) the complex religious civic life of medieval Genoa in terms of feast days and ceremonies, processions and celebrations, described vividly by Caffaro and his continuators.

Santa Maria di Castello (figs. 14–16) stands on the hill of *Castrum* as a leading example of the Genoese Romanesque style—austere on the outside, rich in classical *spolia* on the inside.²⁰ Beside it is the family tower of the Embriaci (fig. 65), who played a leading role in the First Crusade and the siege of Jerusalem, in rustic stone with a (restored) crenellated brick crown, one of some fifty or sixty noble family towers that punctuated the skyline of medieval Genoa. Severe in its triumphal façade, Santa Maria di Castello displays Roman *spolia* over its central portal (fig. 15) and down the processional nave arcades (fig. 16), where Corinthian columns and capitals from pagan temples and crusade trophies are arranged with abstract carved Lombard Romanesque capitals in classical to medieval sequence, including two marble blocks with Kufic verses (fig. 17), above the second and third right columns of the nave arcade, spoils of victories over the Muslim infidel.²¹ In 1442, the Dominicans took over this collegiate church and added domed Renaissance private family chapels on

19 UCP, 71–81. See also chap. 13 in this volume.

20 Ceschi, *Architettura romanica*, 151–8; Poleggi, *Santa Maria di Castello*.

21 For a catalogue of these displayed fragments: Poleggi, *Santa Maria di Castello*, 93–109. Müller relates these to the Embriaco crusading family as spoils donated to their neighborhood church: *Sic hostes*, 65, figs. 38–9; “Genova vittoriosa,” 92–3, fig. 4; see also her discussion in chap. 10 of this volume. Naser Eslami (*Genova*, 162–3, fig. 38) argues that these spoils were part of the general influence of Islamic cities, here displaying Koranic verses (sura 3, lines 187–8). Both the Embriaco tower and church assert family power within the city and larger sea.

the north side, introducing colorful Genoese ceramics influenced by Islamic tilework and Renaissance framed altars with the latest in central and northern Italian figure styles and landscape settings (fig. 21).²² In the Dominicans' adjacent double courtyard, a major center of late medieval learning, the German artist Jost Amman painted an *Annunciation* fresco on the second-floor loggia wall (figs. 19–20; also discussed in chapter 10), reflecting Genoese trade and cultural relations with northern Europe, beneath a complex scholastic program of light rays and vegetal arabesques painted on Gothic ribbed vaults with roundel portraits of Old and New Testament prophets, saints (especially Dominicans), and classical sibyls who prophesy the incarnation of Christ, in fulfillment of Petrarch's Virgilian arcadian vision.²³ This was a "sacred city" around a closed garden, a Solomonian *hortus conclusus* of ecclesiastical community overlooking the harbor.²⁴

At the center of the maritime theater sat the cathedral of San Lorenzo (fig. 24), seat of the bishop (and after 1133, archbishop) of Genoa, in Lombard-Ligurian, Northern Italian Romanesque and Gothic styles.²⁵ Rising above the medieval city in its prominent black and white polychrome marble façade and *campanili* (bell towers), San Lorenzo defined the religious and civic center of Genoa. Founded in the sixth century as a palace church of the archbishop of Milan, living in Genoa in exile, San Lorenzo did not emerge as the cathedral of Genoa until the ninth century, when the church was enclosed by a protective circuit of city walls near Porta di Serravalle in the north. It thus supplanted the original cathedral, the basilica of San Siro, and Saint Syrus's relics were transferred to San Lorenzo. The cathedral's dedication to Roman deacon and protomartyr Saint Lawrence represents its dependence on Ambrosian Milan until Genoa was raised to an archbishopric in 1133, independent of and equal in status to Milan in the north and rival sea power Pisa (which had been elevated to an archbishopric in 1092) to the south.²⁶

22 Poleggi, *Santa Maria di Castello*, 113–89; Naser Eslami, *Genova*, 154–62, pl. 18.

23 Poleggi, *Santa Maria di Castello*, 170–83; Dufour Bozzo et al., *Pittura a Genova*, 82–4, 159; Algeri/De Floriani, *Pittura in Liguria*, 170–82.

24 Warner, *Alone*; Brenner, *Song of Songs*; Horovitz, *Influence*. For sacred manuscripts produced by the Dominican scriptoria of San Domenico and Santa Maria di Castello: De Floriani, "Miniatura."

25 CGM; Cervini, *Portali*.

26 For the complex history of the early Christian (sixth-century), Carolingian (ninth-century), and Romanesque (eleventh- and twelfth-century) churches on this site, see CGM, 15–129, and CSL, 2.33–40. For Saint Lawrence in Rome and Milan, Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals*, 7–40, 69–92; Sella, "Milan"; and Rothrauff, "Pisa." On the creation of the archdiocese: chaps. 2, p. 51, and 12, p. 347.

In the Middle Ages, the colorful west façade of San Lorenzo (figs. 24–6) rose dramatically over a small piazza surrounded by the black and white marble palace arcades of the ecclesiastical Fieschi family, the center of their urban neighborhood, or *albergo*.²⁷ In a fragmentary codex of the Genoese noble Cocharelli family (ca. 1330–40), San Lorenzo is shown under construction (fig. 22), flanked by black and white striped family palaces with ground floor shops (*botteghe*), teeming with trade and social relations, an allegory of civic life, virtue and vice.²⁸ Above this civic space, Christ rises in Majesty (figs. 26–7), surrounded by the four evangelists in the central tympanum, the scene's hieratic style reflecting the influence of French cathedrals such as Chartres (fig. 23) and Rouen—Genoa at the crossroads of the northern European and Mediterranean trading worlds.²⁹ Saint Lawrence, in prayerful adoration, is presented frontally and nude below on his fiery altar grill, a patron saint's Eucharistic sacrifice in anticipation of salvation at the other end of the processional space.³⁰ From earthly to heavenly light and resurrected body, Christ holds open the Book of Judgment above with the inscription, "I am the light of the world." The light of Christ thus appears over the patron saint's triumph over mortal fire, in fulfillment of Lawrence's defiant proclamation (according to Genoese archbishop Jacopo da Varagine's *Golden Legend*): "My night hath no darkness: all things shine with light!" The portal is thus a hierarchical

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- 27 Piazza San Lorenzo was greatly expanded in 1835–50 with the demolition of these palaces to clear the façade and render a more scenic view, along with lowering the surrounding streets and raising the entrance stairs to the church with modern flanking guardian lions. This created a "medieval monument" approached directly from the harborfront by a wide, axial Via San Lorenzo driven right through the medieval urban fabric. This "recreation of the medieval city" was further enhanced by regional superintendent Alfredo d'Andrade's French and English-inspired "medieval restorations" at the end of the nineteenth century. Marcenaro, "Recupero"; Bernardi/Viale, *Alfredo d'Andrade*; Cerri/Fea/Pittarello, *Alfredo d'Andrade*. See also discussions of the façade in chaps. 10, pp. 293–4 and 300–04, and 12, p. 345.
- 28 Fabbri, "Codice Cocharelli." Cf. Ambrogio Lorenzetti's monumental *Good and Bad Government* frescoes in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena: Starn/Partridge, *Arts of Power*, 11–80; and the *Travels of Marco Polo* for comparable global trade relations in the Byzantine, Muslim, and Eastern worlds.
- 29 *CGM*, 133–81; Cervini, *Portali*; *CSL*, 2.66–7. Naser Eslami (*Genova*, 148–54, figs. 31–33) highlights the Islamic mosaic fragments and mihrab ogee arch forms on the Throne of Christ as evocations of eastern biblical space; cf. these assimilations and transformations in Mack, *Bazaar to Piazza*.
- 30 Di Fabio argues that this extraordinary nudity on a medieval church façade is a "theology of the body" in response to the Cathar heresy (i.e., "dualism" of Christ in body and spirit) of this period: *CSL*, 2.68–9.

example of Gothic “New Jerusalem” light symbolism; through Christ and Saint Lawrence, the cathedral becomes a triumphal entry portal from darkness into the light of salvation.³¹

Below Christ in Majesty, the Tree of Jesse with the five kings of Judea rises on the right pilaster of the central portal (i.e., on the left hand of the archbishop facing outward) to the Virgin Mary as *Ecclesia* (the Church) with angels supporting the Trinity, a hierarchical scholastic program; meanwhile, the Tree of Life rises in fulfillment of prophecy on the left pilaster (the priest’s right hand) with the New Testament story of the early life of Christ (Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Adoration of the Magi, Presentation in the Temple, Massacre of the Innocents, and Flight into Egypt). Fertility permeates these fluid bas reliefs, with particular prominence given to pregnancy and (re)birth in the Visitation of the Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth (mother of John the Baptist, Genoa’s patron saint) and prominent vine-scroll capitals that support the portal lintel with the patriarch Jacob blessing his sons Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48) on the right and an abundant, bare-breasted *Maria Mater Ecclesia* (Mary, mother of the church) suckling the Roman saints Peter and Paul on the left—all themes of salvation, destined lineage, and “sacred nourishment” through the Church. All of this takes place in a rich polychrome marble display of spiral columns and floral decorations—a New Eden and Temple of Solomon, images of salvation and triumph.³²

The Precursor of Christ, John the Baptist, patron saint of Genoa and holy water, is commemorated in the north portal of the Cathedral (fig. 30), the door to the Baptistry, in a confined medieval space and diagonal perspective from the right and church entrance, reflecting the original urban context.³³ A triumphal display of antique sarcophagi and sculptural reliefs of paradisaical animals³⁴, overlooking an area that was originally a cemetery (*Paradisus* in the documents) outside the ancient city walls, leads the “sacred way” to the altar-

31 *GL*, 2.441. Certain miracles attributed to Saint Lawrence (*GL*, 2.443) can also be related to this act of cathedral-building. For the Gothic cathedral as Heavenly Jerusalem in French royal tradition: von Simson, *Gothic Cathedral*; and for Jacopo da Varagine, (most recently) Epstein, *Talents*.

32 *CGM*, 164–75; Di Fabio, “Fazio degli Uberti,” 135–7, 148–54.

33 Di Fabio, “Portali”; Di Fabio/Dagnino, “*Ianua*”; *CGM*, 60–76. The spatial transition from front to side façades is made dramatically by the oblique perspective of the north and south bell tower side windows, which focus light into the narthex of the church. Cf. the oblique (45–degree) perspective of late medieval painting and urban planning in White, *Birth*, and Trachtenberg, *Dominion*.

34 Naser Eslami (*Genova*, 160–62) has pointed out the pervasive influence of Mesopotamian and Islamic art on these abstract battling lions and other apocalyptic animals on the San

like portal with a benediction loggia above. This is framed by sculptural reliefs of the Virgin and Child on the left and a bare-breasted siren-fish on the lower right, with floral decorations and supporting angels of John the Evangelist in the doorframe brackets above.

Opposite the “paradisaal” entry to the Baptistry on the north, the south façade features a contemporary portal (fig. 31) in honor of Saint Gotthard of Hildesheim (d. 1038; Italian San Gottardo), patron saint of merchants and gout sufferers, revered by the weary pilgrims and overland traders of the Saint Gotthard Pass across the Alps. An encyclopedic moral program animates the south portal, addressing the street and public way, with good and evil on right and left in anticipation of the Last Judgment; abstract colonettes with apocalyptic animals and souls in limbo amidst interlaced vines wind their way up the portal to historiated composite capitals with Old to New Testament scenes in prefiguration of Christ, particularly travel narratives of exile and return. The south portal (fig. 31) overlooks the main street leading down from the Porta Soprana in the east, defining a “salvific processional way” into the city.³⁵ Thus the baptismal entry and “Road to Calvary” frame the Christian progress of north and south portals to the main west façade of salvation by sea and land.

As one enters through the west portal, Romanesque-Gothic nave arcades in black and white marble (twelfth to fourteenth centuries) march toward the high altar like two ceremonial Roman aqueducts that nourish and monumentalize the maritime city (fig. 32). The dark medieval nave culminates in a light-filled Renaissance coffered-dome crossing with richly gilded, stuccoed, and painted choir decorations dating to the sixteenth-century republic of “Augustan” admiral Andrea Doria (1466–1560). Affixed to a pier on the left gallery arcade, a French-style bust of bifrontal Janus with the inscription *Primus Rex Italiae* (“first king of Italy,” fig. 33), oversees the nave, claiming precedence over Rome and the original Janiculum. The bust of Janus (linked to the medieval Latin form of Genoa, *Ianua*) refers to a major Genoese civic foundation myth and historical origin narrative, one encouraged by Genoese archbishop Jacopo da Varagine, among others.³⁶

On the inside façade of the cathedral, over the central portal, a Byzantine-style *Christ in Majesty* or *Deesis* (fig. 36) with the Virgin Mary, the twelve disciples, and John the Baptist appear to the right of Christ Blessing in apsidal sacramental altar seating. The iconography and Greek inscriptions reflect the

Lorenzo façades. For the larger context of Roman and early medieval remains: *Scultura a Genova*, 1.9–81.

35 *CGM*, 77–87; *CSL*, 2.47–58.

36 For the Janus myth and Genoese civic identity, see chap. 8, pp. 197–9.

close alliance and cultural links between Genoa and the Byzantine empire, particularly after the restoration of the Palaiologan dynasty to Constantinople in 1261.³⁷ The enthroned Mary above is counter-posed to a kneeling Eve below, which would have been complemented by Christ and (now lost) Adam in the original portal ensemble. The addorsing of a French Gothic outer portal to a Byzantine-style inner portal illustrates Genoa's position between west and east at a crossroads in the Mediterranean.

Along the north wall of the cathedral, Byzantine-style frescoes of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries commemorate crusading triumphs during this period of commercial expansion and construction. Saint Peter (fig. 37) appears in procession with crusader saint George and John the Baptist on their way to the baptistery, sacristy, and chapel of the Baptist in the left aisle.³⁸ Beneath these frescoes, over the interior north entrance portal from the spoliated façade of John the Baptist (fig. 30), a Byzantine-style lunette with a suffering Christ between the Virgin Mary and Baptist with mourning angels above (fig. 38)—now largely lost—complements, on the south portal of San Gottardo (fig. 31), a well-preserved Byzantine Madonna and Child with Nicholas (patron of sailors) and Lawrence (cathedral patron) and two angels (fig. 39). These imperial protectors of the city gates of Constantinople were intended to oversee Genoa during this crucial period of Palaiologan alliance and the resurgence of Genoa's commercial empire after 1261, the larger economic context for these improvements to San Lorenzo.

In the presbytery or south transept of the cathedral, Cardinal Luca Fieschi (ca. 1270–1336) commissioned a monumental canopy tomb, chapel, and altarpiece.³⁹ Two Pisan masters sculpted the architectural and figural complex, many fragments of which are today dispersed about the cathedral, the canons' cloister (Museo Diocesano), and the Museo di Sant'Agostino.⁴⁰ The sculpted altar frontal (fig. 41) shows the majestic classical-revival style of Nicola Pisano and his rival Pisa baptistery pulpit (1259) with the *Verification of the Wounds of Christ*, which continues the *Deesis* theme of the interior façade (fig. 36); its subject may allude to the contemporary crisis in the Church and attempts

37 CGM, 261–79; Nelson, "Byzantine Painter." For an example of artistic exchange, see the discussion in chap. 10 of Marcus Grechus, a painter from Constantinople.

38 Von Simson, *Sacred Fortress*; Demus, *Byzantine Art*; Cameron, *Christianity*; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*.

39 CGM, 304–9, and Ameri/Di Fabio, *Luca Fieschi*, 124–8. See also chap. 12, p. 357.

40 The Fieschi tomb was damaged by a gunpowder explosion in 1526 and demolished after the Fieschi conspiracy against the Doria republic in 1547, followed by the Alessian classical rebuilding (a "purging") and decoration of the cathedral crossing after 1550.

to legitimate or “verify” papal power during the Avignon period (1309–77), in which Fieschi was thoroughly involved as a young cardinal appointee of Pope Boniface VIII (1294–1303).⁴¹

A contemporary work by Nicola’s son, Giovanni Pisano, is the monumental canopy tomb of Margaret of Brabant (fig. 43), wife of Emperor Henry VII, who died suddenly in Genoa in 1311.⁴² The remaining fragments near the high altar of San Francesco di Castelletto (secularized by the French and largely destroyed in the 1820s) reveal the expressive Gothic style of the Pisan sculptor as two angels snatch the tearful queen away to Heaven, a Dantesque-Giottesque emotion which also suggests Byzantine influences. Finally, a Pisan sculpture of the recumbent archbishop Jacopo da Varagine (fig. 42) from the church of San Domenico (also destroyed in the 1820s) commemorates the distinguished Dominican scholar, whose works were an inspiration for many of these civic commissions.⁴³ The intersections of these Byzantine, French, Lombard, Ligurian, Tuscan, German and Flemish architectural and sculptural styles demonstrate vividly medieval Genoa’s status as a crossroads of trade and cultural exchange—a subject treated in the next chapter of this volume.

In the medieval tradition of relic and icon veneration, the cathedral chapel of Saint John the Baptist (figs. 34–5) remains a vital center of civic identity, even today. On 4 May 1448, the lay priors of the confraternity of Saint John contracted with Lombard sculptor Domenico Gagini da Bissone for the construction and decoration of a chapel to house the Baptist’s relics; this was first projected for the choir near the high altar, then enlarged in 1450 to include the north side aisle next to the sacristy, baptistery, and Baptist portal.⁴⁴ This contract and its revision of 1450, proposed by Genoese humanist chancellor Jacopo Bracelli, were quickly approved by Doge Giano Campofregoso and the Council of Elders, to compete with other monumental civic reliquary chapels, such as those of Saint Dominic in Bologna and Saint Peter Martyr in Sant’Eustorgio, Milan. Trained as a stone carver in the Florentine workshop of Filippo Brunelleschi, Gagini brought together the Tuscan early Renaissance

41 Luca Fieschi was also related to the two popes from this powerful Guelf family—his great-uncle Sinibaldo, the eminent canon lawyer Innocent IV (1243–54), and his cousin Ottobuono, later Hadrian V (1276): Ameri/Di Fabio, *Luca Fieschi*, esp. 8–24.

42 Seidel, *Giovanni Pisano*; Botto, “Ricostruzione”; Di Fabio/Calderoni Masetti, *Giovanni Pisano*.

43 See the major medieval canopy tombs—which parallel medieval altar polyptychs as images of the sacred Church—by Giovanni Pisano and Tino di Camaino: Moskowitz, *Arca and Italian Gothic Sculpture*. Cf. Pessa, *Genova nel Medioevo*, 221.

44 Kruff, “Cappella”; CSL, 2.87–99.

style of the Pazzi Chapel with the Lombard tradition of the Certosa di Pavia, the Carthusian monastery and burial church of the Visconti dukes of Milan.

A great stone canopy with late Gothic pinnacles, similar to a medieval polyptych or the rival dogal basilica of San Marco in Venice, surmounts a serliana arch that frames the reliquary altar and sumptuous domed chapel, not unlike late antique and early Christian presentation loggias that gave authority and *maiestas* to Roman emperors. A profusion of Florentine-style figures and narrative roundel reliefs of patron saints of Genoa—George, Sebastian, John the Baptist, Mary and the Christ Child, Lawrence, and Syrus—mingle with the cardinal virtues in this monumental civic allegory. Combining scholasticism with humanism, it frames the four main narrative reliefs illustrating the life of the Baptist, patron saint of Genoa: his nativity, preaching, baptism of Christ, and decapitation.

From the fifteenth through the mid-sixteenth centuries, the reliquary chapel of Saint John the Baptist became a major focus of Genoese dogal patronage and state ceremony, with feasts celebrated on both the saint's nativity (24 June) and death (29 August). The celebration of the saint's nativity, in particular, rivaled that of contemporary Florence, with members of the lay confraternity of Saint John carrying the *arca* (the Gothic gold and silver reliquary containing the saint's relics; figs. 50–51), from the cathedral to the harborfront, where the archbishop “blessed the sea” in Genoa's version of Venice's dogal *Sposalizio del mare* (the “marriage to the sea”, a ritual performed annually on the feast of the Ascension).⁴⁵ With John the Baptist, medieval Genoa participated in the *furta sacra*, or sacred thefts, that claimed power and precedence in the medieval Mediterranean.

Municipal Buildings

In 1260, the first *capitano del popolo* Guglielmo Boccanegra commissioned the Palazzo San Giorgio (fig. 52) as part of a renovation of the *Molo* (the wharf),

45 The relics of the Baptist were also taken out of the Cathedral and processed through the city on numerous occasions of public celebration or penitence; Calcagnino says that the relics were “renewed by these intercessions” (*Historia*, 119). For the Gothic *Arca di San Giovanni Battista*, see Cervetto, *Tesoro*, 47–52; Botto, “Museo,” 12; Marica, “Museo,” 9–11. Relations between the reliquary *arca* of the Baptist and the Janus myth to Noah's “ark” in the cathedral nave inscriptions, as well as the cathedral as a whole, and the port are suggestive here in terms of sacred progeny and redemption; see discussions in chap. 8, pp. 204–9, and 12, pp. 348–51.

recentering the political life of the commune on the Genoese harbor in the city's commercial center.⁴⁶ Designed by the Cistercian builder Fra Oliverio, according to the dedicatory inscription over the entrance (fig. 54), the Palazzo San Giorgio followed the model of Lombard and northern Italian communal palaces—in particular, Il Broletto, the communal palace of Como (1215; fig. 53), origin place of the *maestri Antelami*—with black and white marble striations, a ground floor loggia, and ceremonial meeting hall on the *piano nobile* (main upper floor).⁴⁷ According to the Genoese annals, the Byzantine emperor gave the Genoese “the large and ample palace, in the form of a castle,” that the Venetians occupied in Constantinople, following the end of the Latin occupation in 1261, and “the Genoese, amid the clamor of trumpets, bugles and horns, tore down that palace to the foundations, and they transported certain stones to Genoa in their ships, of which several were placed in the *casa del Comune* built on the harbor front.”⁴⁸

Palazzo San Giorgio became a celebration of Boccanegra's popular regime and Genoese Mediterranean triumph. After Genoa's decisive victory over Pisa at Meloria in 1284, the captured Pisan harbor chains (fig. 55) were displayed as spoils on the east façade of Palazzo San Giorgio—facing the city, the main market square, and civic church of San Giorgio—as well as on the city gates and the façade of San Matteo, in celebration of Oberto Doria's naval victory.⁴⁹ A relief sculpture and inscription were placed on the triumphal entrance façade displaying a griffin (Genoa) over an eagle (the Holy Roman Empire) and wolf (Rome and the papacy), representing Genoese triumph during this decisive period of communal architecture. George and John the Baptist, crusading co-patron saints and protectors of medieval Genoa, triumphed over the Pisan griffin and Venetian lion of Saint Mark, which were appropriated and assimilated into the fabric of Palazzo San Giorgio and the Molo.

In 1291, the communal government moved inland (fig. 57) next to the cathedral of San Lorenzo and archbishop's palace in a consolidation of landed power spearheaded by the *capitani del popolo* Oberto Doria and Oberto Spinola. The

46 G&G, 135–52; Ferrando Cabona, *Palazzo*; Poleggi/Croce, *Ritratto*, 147–8. In the sixteenth century the *Molo* became known as the *Molo Vecchio* (old wharf), to distinguish it from the *Molo Nuovo* (new wharf) across the harbor below the Lanterna.

47 Frigerio, *Duomo*; Russell, *Vox civitatis*, 175–95; Miller, “Episcopal to Communal Palaces,” 175–84.

48 AGC for 1262, 6.82–3; Müller, *Sic hostes*, 86–94, and “Genova vittoriosa,” 96–103; Epstein/Gorse, “Genoa,” 404–5. On other military *spolia* as well as commemorations of the Genoese-Byzantine alliance (such as the *pallio* of San Lorenzo), see chap. 10.

49 Cf. chap. 10, pp. 299–300, for a fuller discussion of the harbor chains; on Meloria, see chap. 16, pp. 465–6.

location, close to their family neighborhoods, became the Palazzo Ducale after 1339 with the election of the first “perpetual doge,” Simone Boccanegra.⁵⁰ On the waterfront, Palazzo San Giorgio (fig. 52) became the customs house, and then, in 1407, seat of the famous Casa di San Giorgio, which Machiavelli called a “state within the state.” A series of seated and standing statues of *Benemeriti* or “protectors” of the Genoese bank—major monuments of Renaissance sculpture—was commissioned along the walls of the Boccanegra hall on the *piano nobile*, commemorating this conversion from communal government to civic banking.⁵¹

Finally, the palace and tower of the exiled Guelf Alberto Fieschi, Count of Lavagna, were acquired in 1294 to augment the communal palace to the south and east, embracing the San Lorenzo complex and including an enclosed courtyard and a large hall for dogal coronations. This expansion and redecoration from Gothic to Renaissance, baroque, and neoclassical styles continued from the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries. Nonetheless, its exterior loggia and rusticated façade with campanile (1291) are important as an early statement of communal landed power and ceremonial display—located as it was opposite the archbishop’s palace and the entrance to the Doria family neighborhood (*albergo*). As such this exposed fragment demonstrates the development of the medieval commune.

Family *Alberghi*

Genoa is famous for its family *alberghi* (urban neighborhoods), a social phenomenon which also defined the patchwork quilt confederation of family *feudi* and local communes on the Ligurian Rivas.⁵² Anthropological historian Edoardo Grendi describes the Genoese *albergo* as an association or alliance of families for mutual protection and interest between the city and the *contado*, involving a common family name, proximity, identity, and allegiance in military, religious, social, economic, political, and judicial affairs.⁵³ Medieval Genoa was a city of *alberghi* just as it was a city of *portici*, with neighbor-

50 Sborgi, *Palazzo Ducale*; Spalla/Spalla, *Palazzo Ducale*; Poleggi/Croce, *Ritratto*, 168–70.

51 In the late nineteenth century, Superintendent of Monuments for Piedmont and Liguria Alfredo D’Andrade, inspired by Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc, extensively “restored” the Palazzo San Giorgio along with many other medieval Genoese monuments: see n. 27 above.

52 On the dynamic relationships between Genoa and Liguria, see chap. 2.

53 Grendi, “Profilo storico”; Hughes, “Urban Growth”; also discussion in chap. 7, pp. 172–3.

hoods and arcades at the center of commercial, familial, and communal social relations, representation, and trade.⁵⁴ In 1379, there were 64 *alberghi* listed in the tax registers; in 1465 there were 32, which were consolidated into 28 in the 1528 republic of Andrea Doria.⁵⁵ Gathered around their defensive family towers and tower-like black and white palaces, loggias, piazzas, and churches, the Embriaci lived near Santa Maria di Castello (fig. 65), the Fieschi near San Lorenzo and in the suburb of Carignano, the Cattaneo and Della Volta near San Giorgio and San Torpete in the Roman *civitas*, and the Grimaldi and Spinola near San Luca in the *burgus* (map 8).

Immediately to the north of San Lorenzo and the Palazzo Ducale is the *albergo* of the ancient Doria family around San Matteo: one of the most significant and coherent medieval family neighborhoods still extant (figs. 9–11 and 62–4).⁵⁶ San Matteo was founded in 1125 by Martino Doria in a trade faubourg outside the ninth-century Carolingian walls, part of the bishop's lands of *Domoculta*, which were rapidly developed after their incorporation into the city with the building of the 1155–8 walls. The original Doria church of 1125 was on the street leading to the cathedral, on the site of the present family piazza (fig. 62). This was torn down and moved back (eastward) in 1278 as part of the development of this area to create a balanced family church (fig. 9) and piazza space with San Matteo (patron saint of tax collectors, an occupation the Doria family held as a special communal privilege) at the head of the enclave (fig. 11), surrounded by Doria family palace towers (fig. 64) with open ground-floor arcades and staircases ascending to upper floors overlooking the heart of the *albergo*, the piazza or *curia*. Building and space were thus unified in an axial ensemble usually identified with Renaissance town planning. Leon Battista Alberti (1404–72) was born illegitimately to an exiled old Florentine family in Genoa, and many of his classicizing architectural ideas are anticipated in Piazza San Matteo, which may have influenced his Vitruvian architectural treatise, *De re aedificatoria* (dedicated to Pope Nicholas V in 1452), or the building of Pienza, an “ideal Renaissance piazza,” in 1462 by the Siennese humanist Pius II (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini), as an urban *albergo* of another kind.⁵⁷

54 UCP, 225–52 and plates 3, 12, 13; Poleggi/Cevini, *Genova*, 63–85. Naser Eslami (*Genova*, 15–19, 189–223) argues that the Islamic trading city is fundamental for these medieval transformations of Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine traditions of porticoes, *fondaci*, family neighborhoods, and colonial settlements.

55 Heers, *Family Clans*, 84–5.

56 D'Oria, *San Matteo*; Algeri, “San Matteo”; Gorse, “Family Enclave”; D'Oria/Gadducci, *San Matteo*. See also discussion in chap. 12, pp. 353–4.

57 Alberti, *On the Art of Building*; Mack, *Pienza*.

No wonder the young Piccolomini cardinal admired Genoa's "magnificent buildings, all of marble, that rise toward the sky" in an early laudation of 1432.⁵⁸

The Genoese *albergo* with its church and palaces can be seen most perfectly here, with its clusters of defensive towers belonging to leading family members looking inward toward the gathering place of the central piazza, architecturally united in black and white marble from head to foot. For most Italian cities, scholars have noted the communes' emphasis on public (communal) patronage over private (family) patronage, framing the two options as alternatives for how members of an urban elite might choose to spend their money and pursue power. In Genoa, however, the urban elite combined private and public patronage, a trend that goes back to the first *compagna comunis* of 1099; in this sense both Genoa's commune and great families functioned as a "privatistic family republic." At the head of the piazza, over the church's entrance portal, a Byzantine mosaic of Saint Matthew (fig. 11) oversees the Doria piazza (fig. 62), recalling Genoa's connection to the East during this period of crusading and commercial expansion. As with San Lorenzo and Palazzo San Giorgio, the façade becomes a triumphal monument, a billboard of *spolia*, and a civic chronicle, with epic inscriptions in Lombardic letters along its white Carrara marble bands, historical strata memorializing great naval victories achieved by the Doria on behalf of the *patria* (fig. 10, top to bottom): Oberto Doria at Meloria (1284) and Corrado Doria at Porto Pisano (1290), both victories over Pisa; then Lamba Doria at Curzola (1298); Pagano Doria at Galata (1352) and at Sapienza (1354); and Luciano Doria at Pola (1379), all victories over Venice. This Gothic assembly of triumphant Doria ancestors leads to the final two inscriptions in Renaissance Roman capitals, praising the participation of Filippino Doria (Andrea Doria's cousin) in the French victory at Naples in 1528, and Andrea Doria's foundation of the Genoese republic that same year.⁵⁹

Each inscription begins with the civic insignia of the Saint George cross beside the Doria imperial eagle (reflecting their Ghibelline affiliation): commune and family together, with details of galleys engaged and prisoners captured, like a classical Roman triumph mixed with medieval Genoese accounting. A *spolia* bust and torso crown the church façade, while a classical harvest sarcophagus with *genius* figures holding cornucopia (symbols of ancient abundance that imply a Doria "Golden Age") is mounted into the façade, serving as the tomb of Lamba Doria after his victory at Curzola. This sacralization of the body was later carried into the church itself as the Gothic interior was redecorated in

58 *GM*, 112–3.

59 D'Oria, *San Matteo*, 18–70; D'Oria/Gadducci, *San Matteo*, 63–71; Müller, *Sic hostes*, 107–56, 243–5, and "Genova vittoriosa," 101–5.

festive Renaissance style (similar to the crossing of San Lorenzo, fig. 32), with the body of admiral Andrea Doria, *Pater patriae* of the Genoese republic, buried like a saint's relics in the crypt beneath the high altar.

Next to the church was the cloister garden built in 1308 by "Marcus Venetus", a captive of Curzola, according to an inscription. Spoils and commemorative inscriptions were displayed within, such as a relief of the harbor chains of Porto Pisano (fig. 56). Opposite San Matteo, the palace of Lamba Doria (fig. 64) with its dedicatory inscription above the ground-floor loggia, was donated by the commune after that admiral's victory at Curzola to serve as the family's *domus magna* (great house), a gathering place for the entire *albergo*. Throughout Genoa, these family loggias, palaces, and churches celebrated the medieval *consorterie*—associations that formed the social, political, economic, religious, military, and juridical basis of the society. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these medieval loggias and arcades were filled in on the ground floor to make enclosed entry spaces, transforming the open spaces of the medieval city into the closed private family spaces of the Renaissance city. Genoa went from a city of porticoes (*portici*) to a city of portals (*portali*), with painted-stucco classicizing façades covering the black and white marble of the medieval city. Restorers of the medieval revival have been uncovering these medieval strata ever since—part of the revealed layers or palimpsest of the medieval city.

Next to the palace of Lamba Doria, a Renaissance portal sculpture or *soprapporta* of *Saint George Slaying the Dragon* (1457) by Giovanni Gagini (fig. 63) celebrated the Doria crusading tradition and privilege of displaying the co-patron saint with John the Baptist, part of a distinguished Genoese portal tradition and civic iconography in churches, palaces, and public spaces throughout Liguria and the Genoese colonies.⁶⁰ The protective military saint continued the foundation iconography of Janus and *Ianua*: from the twelfth century, the Banner of Saint George was taken out of the church of San Giorgio on the harborfront to bless departing Genoese fleets, as is recorded in the civic annals.⁶¹ In characteristic Genoese fashion, Saint George thus developed from a crusading protector into patron saint of the Casa di San Giorgio: crusade and commerce were configured in Saint George slaying all comers.

60 Kruft, *Portali*; Tagliaferro, "Secolo"; Bedocchi Melucci, "Teste all'antica"; Rislow, *Doorways*.

61 E.g. *AGC* for 1234, 4.18; 1241, 5.16 and 29; and 1242, 5.48. On the cult of Saint George: chap. 8, pp. 204–5.

Family *Feudi* on the Rivas

Just as the nobility controlled the medieval city from their *alberghi*, which concentrated family life and its associated social groups (of nobles, merchants, and artisans) into a vertical hierarchy, they also controlled the Ligurian rivas (Levante, east, and Ponente, west), along with trading colonies and monopoly concessions abroad (maps 4 and 8).⁶² The rugged Rivas were a patchwork quilt of family *feudi* (ancestral holdings, castles, churches, and estates), just as the medieval city integrated family, ecclesiastical, and communal authorities. To the west originated the Guelf Grimaldi and Ghibelline Doria and Spinola families; to the east, the Guelf Fieschi dominated as counts of Lavagna.⁶³ Town and country maintained close relations, with the city a source of military and commercial power, the countryside a source of agricultural provision, as well as a seasonal retreat and solace from the city during times of plague and factional exile.

At the western extreme of Liguria, the Doria family castle of Dolceacqua (figs. 66–7) rises over the family *feudo* with paired towers and an imposing block-like fortress, commanding the village and valley torrent bridge along with terraced olive groves and vineyards. A seventeenth-century bird's-eye view (fig. 67) shows its classic development from the original medieval round tower (twelfth century) to paired-tower fortress façade and palace belvedere (fifteenth century) to formal pleasure garden and casino retreat (sixteenth century)—from medieval enclosed fortitude to open Renaissance luxury in a landscape of power.⁶⁴

To the east of Genoa, near Portofino, the secluded Doria Benedictine abbey of San Fruttuoso (fig. 68) features a central Romanesque (tenth-century) lookout tower over a basilican nave church housing the ashes of Saint Fructuosus, early Christian bishop-martyr of Catalonia. Within its scenic monastic arcaded façade, the Doria family ancestors are housed in the cloister crypt within black and white arcaded tombs, all in noble military file (fig. 69).⁶⁵ In a prime example of medieval feudal and urban interdependence, the church of San Matteo in the Doria family piazza in Genoa was a priory of San Fruttuoso. In the sixteenth century, Andrea Doria continued the patronage of San Fruttuoso

62 Cf. chaps. 3, pp. 67–9; 17, pp. 479–80, and 18, pp. 501–10; also GXV, 511–611; Heers, “Two Aristocracies”; Spalla, *L'architettura popolare*; Lopez, *Colonie*; Marcenaro, “Testimonianze”; Boccardo, “Marmi antichi.”

63 See discussion in chap. 3.

64 *Castelli*; Stringa, *Castelli*, 8–14, 27–30.

65 Trinca, *San Fruttuoso*.

contemporary with his redecoration of San Matteo as a Renaissance funerary church, with restorations and added *spolia* along with a Renaissance tower to oversee the sea and protect the abbey from Saracen pirates. From here, medieval pilgrims and Grand Tour travelers alike marveled at Liguria's scenic landscape, their entrance to Italy.

To the east, the rival Guelf Fieschi decorated their church of San Salvatore (fig. 70) in black and white marble, with an adjacent bishop's palace (fig. 71) built by Pope Innocent IV and his cardinal nephew (later Hadrian V) in 1245. Nearer Genoa, the church of Santa Maria in Via Lata in Carignano (fig. 8) served as a suburban family base, and along with the family *albergo* at San Lorenzo supported the Fieschi as the leading ecclesiastical family of Genoa. Unfortunately, this complex was largely destroyed after the Fieschi conspiracy of 1547 (this family's version of the Florentine Pazzi conspiracy of 1478).

From the hill of Santa Tecla, to the east of Genoa, doge Simone Boccanegra's L-shaped villa opened to a panoramic view of the city overlooking the Bisagno valley and the eastern approach to the Porta Soprana, forming a signorial court in the countryside (fig. 72).⁶⁶ Its ground-floor loggia, exterior staircase, expansive terrace, elongated four-lighted windows on the *piano nobile*, and great hall with adjacent living quarters defined a new type of suburban villa, distinctive from feudal castles and related to Petrarch's contemporary humanist vision of nature and landscape. This development can also be seen at the Villa Tomati (fig. 73), high up above the Val Polcevera west of Genoa, with its more block-like, L-shaped open form, corner loggia, viewing terrace, and Gothic to Renaissance window and painted wood ceiling framing.⁶⁷ Finally, the Villa Cattaneo-Imperiale di Terralba (fig. 74) defines an early Renaissance longitudinal villa type, set above the Bisagno landscape with corner loggias in classical orders and a black Promontorio stone corner entrance portal with Saint George and French fleur-de-lis groined vault corbels.⁶⁸ During the 1502 entry into Genoa of the French king Louis XII, the Villa Fieschi in Carignano (no longer extant) served as the temporary residence for state receptions and audiences, for, as a French chronicler said, "the Genoese were called the gatesmen of Italy."⁶⁹ During the same visit, Lorenzo Cattaneo invited Louis and his court to his newly-finished villa in Terralba for a great banquet "amidst the beautiful

66 De Negri, *Ville*, 368–9. This villa was begun by *capitano del popolo* Guglielmo Boccanegra in 1251 (cf. Palazzo San Giorgio on the harborfront) and expanded by Simone Boccanegra (first "perpetual doge") in 1359.

67 De Negri, *Ville*, 59–61; Poleggi, "Genova," 233; Gorse, "Renaissance Villas," 256–7.

68 De Negri, *Ville*, 336–46; Poleggi, "Genova," 234; Gorse, "Renaissance Villas," 258–60.

69 Gorse, "Renaissance Villas," 258; Gorse, "Triumphal Entries," 1.190–2.

[Plinian] pleasure gardens full of orange and pomegranate trees and fruits of every type; in sum, it is an early paradise.”⁷⁰ In this way, these Renaissance villas continued Genoa’s medieval tradition of art and architecture conceived in relation to topography, matching landscape and sea to pleasure and politics, and creating a “paradisal portal to Italy and our world,” that continues to define Genoa, this “maritime theater” in the Mediterranean, still today.

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Figures



FIGURE 1 *Nautical map of Italy with illustrations of Genoa and Venice, from Jacopo Russo, Nautical Atlas (Portolan), Modena, 1521. Modena, Biblioteca Estense ms Ital. 550, fol. 3r. Photo: Biblioteca Estense.*



FIGURE 2 *Cristoforo de' Grassi, Antiquae urbis Genuae picturam (View of Genoa in 1481), Genoa, 1597, tempera on canvas, Galata Museo del Mare, Genoa.*

Photo: Galata Museo del Mare, Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AGenova_1481_\(copy_1597\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AGenova_1481_(copy_1597).jpg), accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 3 *Porta dei Vacca, n50–58. Photo: C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 4 *Porta Soprana, 1150–58.* Photo: Flavio Ferrari, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Le_torri_di_Porta_Soprana,_Genova.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.

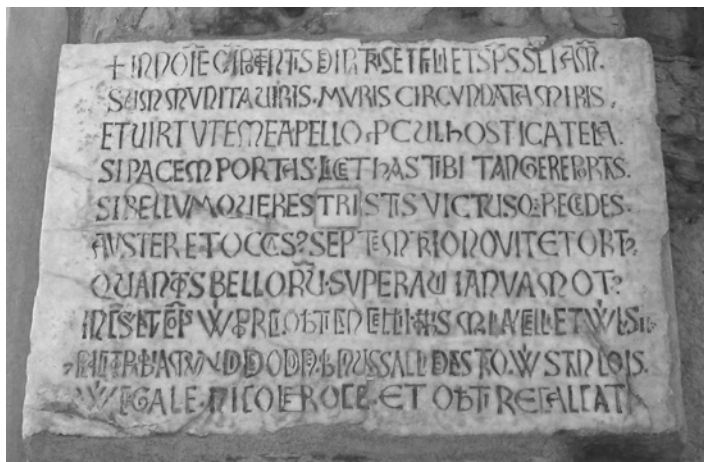


FIGURE 5 *Porta Soprana, n55 inscription on north portal. Photo: C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 6 *Remains of the monastery of Sant'Andrea, early twelfth century. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 7
Santi Cosma e Damiano, façade, twelfth to thirteenth centuries. Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genova-chiesa_dei_ss_cosma_e_damiano1.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 8
Santa Maria in Via Lata, façade, mid-fourteenth century. Photo: Alessio Sbarbaro, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chiesa_di_Santa_Maria_in_via_Lata_Genova_02.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 9 *San Matteo, façade, ca. 1278.* Photo: Sailko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genova_san_matteo_facciata_01.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 10 *San Matteo, façade inscriptions, thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.* Photo: C.E. Beneš.



FIGURE 11 *San Matteo, central portal lunette, Byzantine-style mosaic of Saint Matthew holding his gospel, late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Photo: Sailko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genova_san_matteo_facciata_mosaico_medievale_con_san_matteo.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 12 *Taddeo di Bartolo, Virgin and Child; tempera on panel, ca. 1400, Santa Maria delle Vigne. Photo: Sailko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Taddeo_di_bartolo,_madonna_col_bambino_fine_del_XIV_secolo_02.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.*

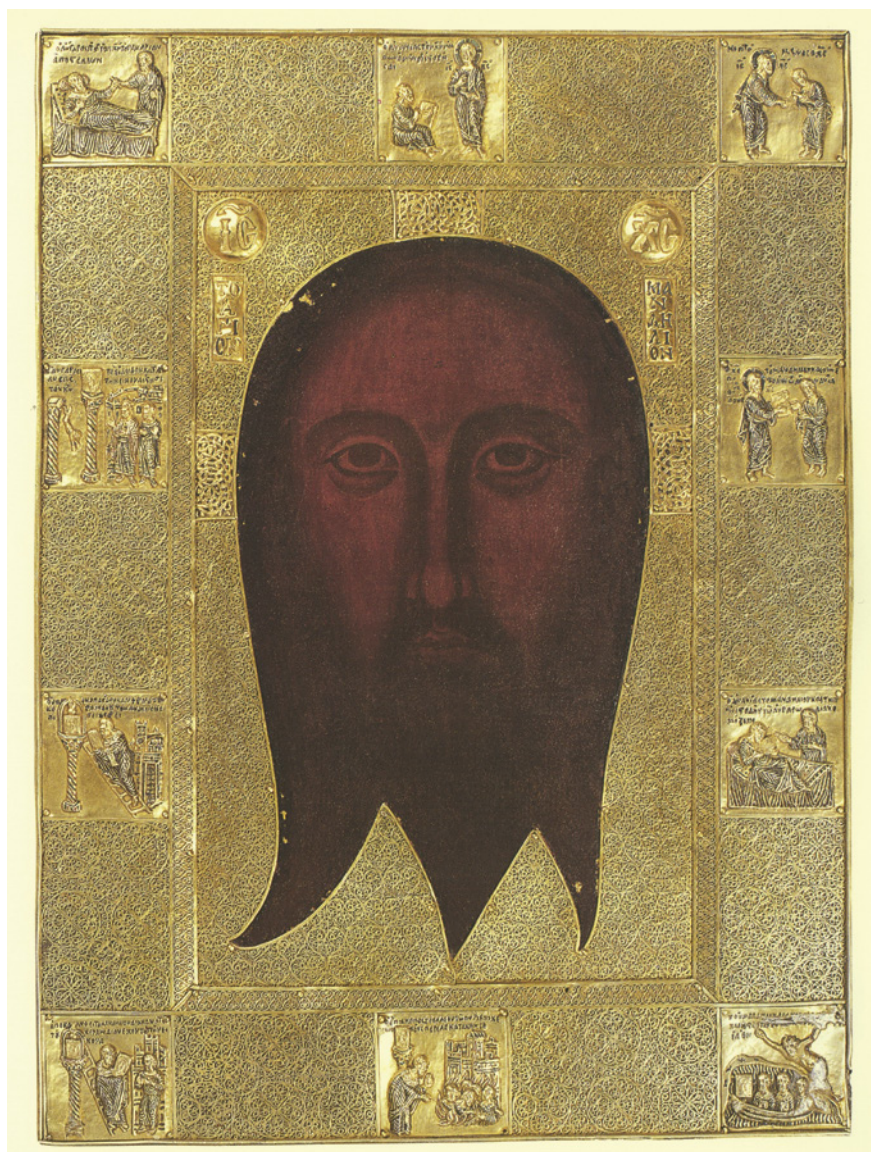


FIGURE 13 *Sacro Volto or Mandylion, a gift from the Byzantine emperor presented by the doge of Genoa to San Bartolomeo degli Armeni in 1384. Photo: G. Rosser.*



FIGURE 14 *Santa Maria di Castello, façade, mid-twelfth century.* Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Genova-chiesa_di_santa_maria_di_castello-facciata2.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 15 *Santa Maria di Castello, central portal, detail.* Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 16 *Santa Maria di Castello, nave.* Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genova-chiesa_di_santa_maria_di_castello-interno_navata.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 17 *Spoliated blocks containing Kufic inscriptions with verses from the Koran, nave arcade, Santa Maria di Castello, date unknown.* Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 18 *Ceramic tiles with monochrome decoration in blue, Santa Maria di Castello, ca. 1400. Photo: Pessa and Ramagli, Azulejos e laggioni.*



FIGURE 19 *Jost Amman (also known as Jos Amann of Ravensburg), Annunciation, fresco, 1451, Santa Maria di Castello, cloister loggia. Photo: Larissa Veronesi, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jos_Amann_Annunciazione_1451_Santa_Maria_di_Castello_Genova.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 20

Anonymous artist, prophets and sibyls, with Amman Annunciation (fig. 19) fresco, ca. 1450, Santa Maria di Castello, cloister loggia. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 21

Pier Francesco Sacchi, Altarpiece with Saint Antoninus with the Baptist and Thomas Aquinas, ca. 1526, Santa Maria di Castello, south aisle, Botto Chapel. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 22 *Construction of the cathedral of San Lorenzo, illustrated in the Cocharelli Codex, parchment, Italy, late fourteenth century. London, British Library, Add. MS 27965, fol. 7. Photo © The British Library Board.*



FIGURE 23 *Chartres Cathedral, façade with Portail royal, mid-twelfth century. Photo: Tony Hisgett, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_Cathedral.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 24 *Cathedral church of San Lorenzo, façade, eleventh to sixteenth centuries.* Photo: Jensens, Wikimedia Commons: https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cattedrale_di_San_Lorenzo_Genoa.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 25 *San Lorenzo, triple-bayed west portal, ca. 1215–25.* Photo: Alessio Sbarbaro, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:San_Lorenzo_Genova_01.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 26
San Lorenzo, central portal, ca. 1215–25. Photo: Alessio Sbarbaro, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:San_Lorenzo_Genova_facciata_03.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 27 San Lorenzo, central portal tympanum, Christ in Majesty, ca. 1215–25. Photo: C.E. Beneš.



FIGURE 28 *San Lorenzo, central portal tympanum, crown of Saint Lawrence, ca. 1225. Photo: CSL.*



FIGURE 29 *San Lorenzo, central portal, detail of polychrome decoration. Photo: R. Müller.*

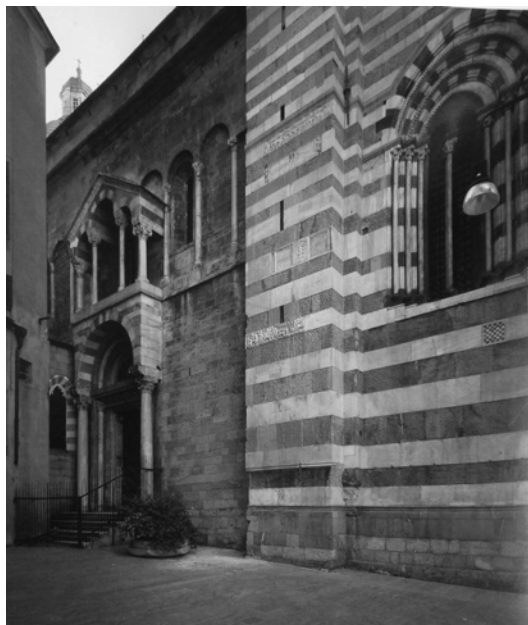


FIGURE 30
*San Lorenzo, north façade and
John the Baptist portal. Photo:
CGM, 66, fig. 17.*



FIGURE 31
*San Lorenzo, south façade and
Saint Gotthard portal. Photo:
G. Gorse.*

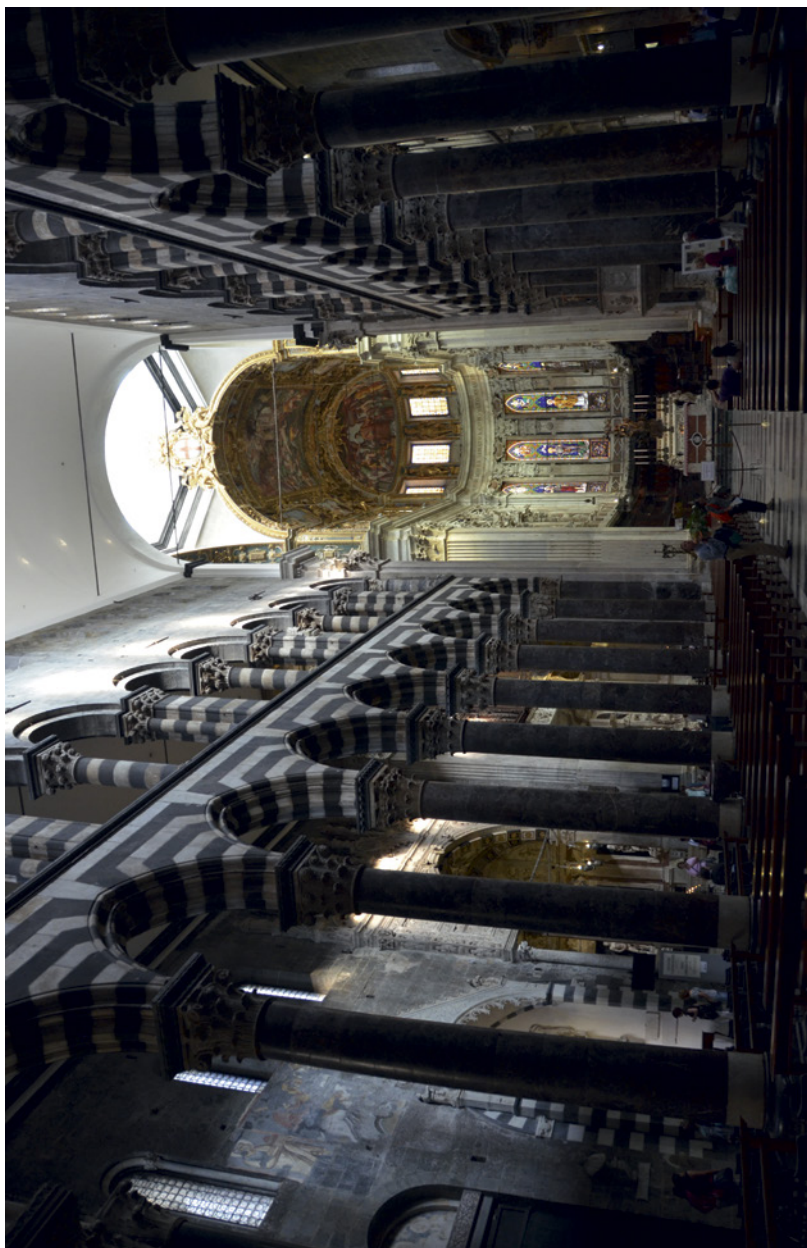


FIGURE 32 *San Lorenzo, central nave.* Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 33 *San Lorenzo, north nave arcade, Janus head and inscription, ca. 1307–12. Photo: C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 34

San Lorenzo, north aisle, view into the chapel of Saint John the Baptist by Domenico Gagini, 1450–65. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 35 *Domenico Gagini, chapel of Saint John the Baptist, 1450–65, San Lorenzo, north aisle. Photo: Sailko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Duomo_di_genova,_cappella_di_s._giovanni_battista,_1451-65,_01.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 36 *Greek master, Christ in Majesty (Deesis), fresco, ca. 1312, San Lorenzo, endonarthex (west portal interior). Photo: Daderot, Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ_and_the_Apostles_fresco_-_San_Lorenzo_\(Genoa\)_-_DSC01938.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ_and_the_Apostles_fresco_-_San_Lorenzo_(Genoa)_-_DSC01938.JPG), accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 37 *Saint George flanked by Saints Peter and John the Baptist, fresco fragment, ca. 1312, San Lorenzo, north wall. Photo: CSL.*



FIGURE 38 Christ as the Man of Sorrows flanked by the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist, *fresco*, ca. 1312, *San Lorenzo, north portal interior*. Photo: C. Di Fabio, *CGM*, 270, fig. 54.



FIGURE 39 Mary Eleousa with Saints Nicholas and Lawrence, *fresco*, ca. 1312, *San Lorenzo, south portal interior*. Photo: C. Di Fabio, *CGM*, 269, fig. 53.

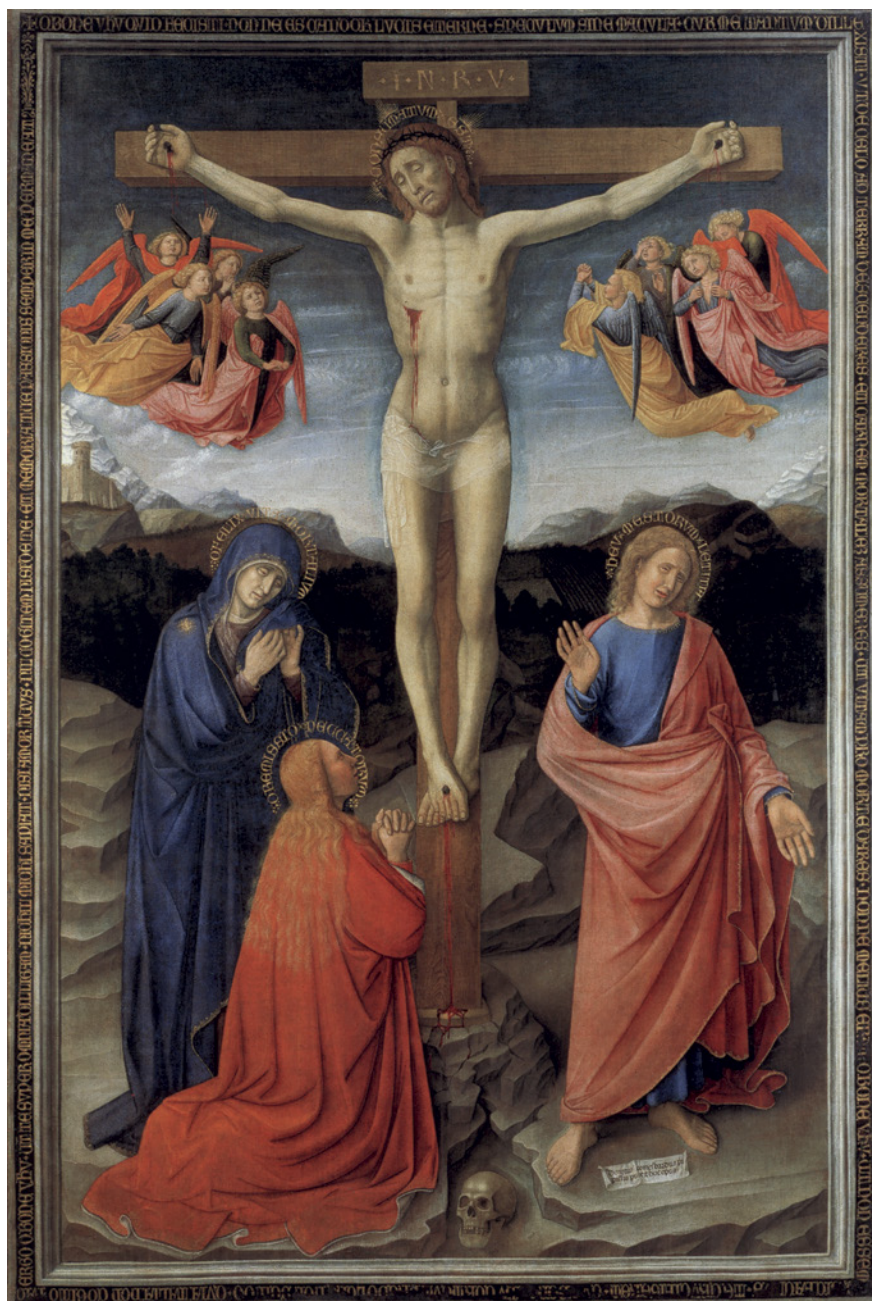


FIGURE 40 *Donato de' Bardi, Crucifixion, ca. 1440, Pinacoteca civica, Savona. Photo: Pinacoteca civica, Savona.*



FIGURE 41

Pisan sculptors, probably Bonaiuto di Michele and Lupo di Francesco, tomb of Cardinal Luca Fieschi, ca. 1338, formerly in San Lorenzo, Museo Diocesano. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 42 *Anonymous Pisan or Campionese master, recumbent tomb figure of Archbishop Jacopo da Varagine, ca. 1298, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 43 *Giovanni Pisano, figures of Queen Margaret and angels from the tomb of Queen Margaret of Brabant, 1313, formerly in San Lorenzo, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 44 *Marble griffin, ca. 1300, formerly in San Lorenzo, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 45 *Platter of Saint John the Baptist, late Roman stonework in chalcedony with added metalwork, Paris, ca. 1400, San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo: G. Gorse.*

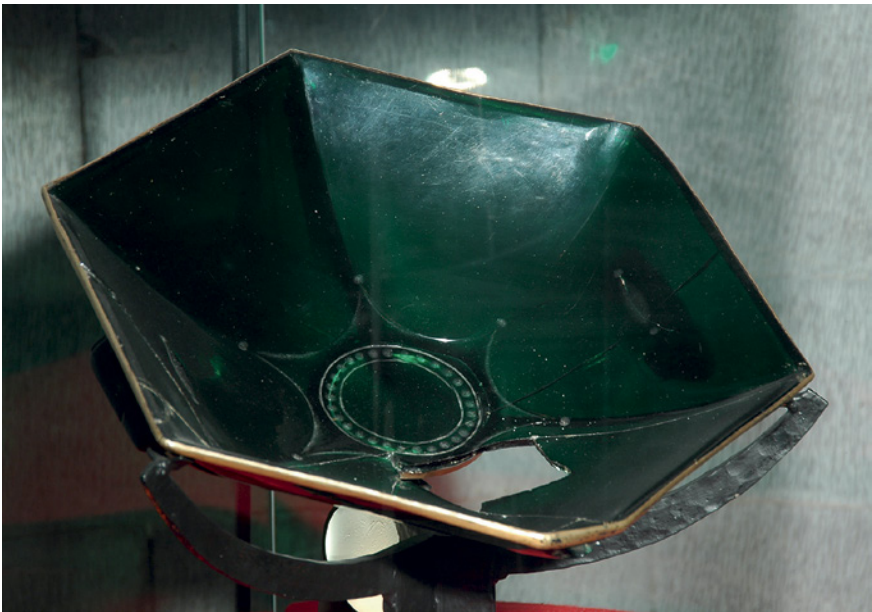


FIGURE 46 *The Sacro Catino (Holy Chalice), San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo (before 2017 restoration): C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 47 *The Pallio di San Lorenzo, metallic thread on silk, Museo di Sant'Agostino, Photo (before 2017 restoration): Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa.*



FIGURE 48
*Reliquary of the arm of Saint James,
 Byzantine metalwork, twelfth century,
 San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo:
 G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 49 *Arca (reliquary casket) of Saint John the Baptist, local metalwork, twelfth century,
 San Lorenzo, Museo del Tesoro. Photo: Museo del Tesoro, Genoa.*

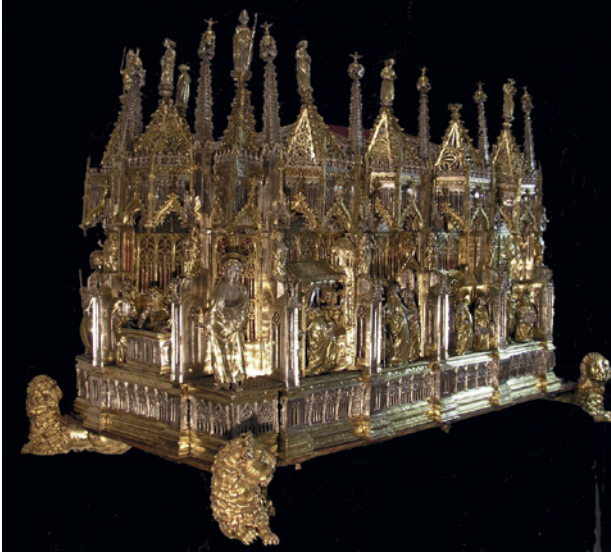


FIGURE 50
*Processional reliquary
 of Saint John the Baptist,
 Gothic metalwork,
 fifteenth century, San
 Lorenzo, Museo del
 Tesoro. Photo: Museo del
 Tesoro, Genoa.*



FIGURE 51 *Print showing a procession with the reliquary of Saint
 John the Baptist, frontispiece, A. Calcagnino, Historia
 del glorioso precursore di N.S.S. Giovanni Battista,
 Genoa, 1648. Photo: G. Gorse, Getty Research Institute,
 Los Angeles (92-B27448).*



FIGURE 52 *Fra Oliverio (Cistercian master builder), Palazzo San Giorgio, 1260 structure at right, sixteenth-century wing (added after the building became the headquarters of the Casa di San Giorgio) at left. Photo: C.E. Beneš.*



FIGURE 53 *Il Broletto, the town hall in Como, 1215. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 54

Portal with lion's head, beasts, and a 1260 inscription commemorating the construction of the Palazzo San Giorgio. Photo: Twice25, Wikimedia Commons: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/file:dscf8103.jpg>, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 55

Pisan harbor chains, formerly hung as trophies on the Palazzo San Giorgio, the churches of San Matteo and Santa Maria di Castello, and elsewhere, but returned in 1860 and now hanging in the Camposanto, Pisa. Photo: Hispalois, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CamposantoPisa_cadena_puerto_pisano.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 56 *Marble relief showing Porto Pisano with intact harbor chains, 1290, formerly in the cloister of San Matteo, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 57
Palazzo Ducale, rusticated loggia and Torre Grimaldina, thirteenth century. Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 58

Seal of the commune of Genoa showing a griffin dominating an eagle and a fox, wax, after 1193. Photo: Bascapé, "Sigilli dei comuni," pl. VIII, no. 89.



FIGURE 59 *Genoese quartaro with griffin rampant, 1339–1339. Photo courtesy Daniele Ricci.*



FIGURE 60 *Genoese denaro with gate (ianua) motif, 1140s*. Photo courtesy Daniele Ricci.



FIGURE 61 *Gold genovino with gate (ianua) motif, 1252–1339*. Photo: Carlomorino, Wikimedia Commons: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genovino1.jpg>, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 62 *Piazza San Matteo, with Doria family palazzi: church founded 128, church façade and piazza, 1278; palazzi, thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. Photo: Archivio Fotografico del Comune di Genova.*

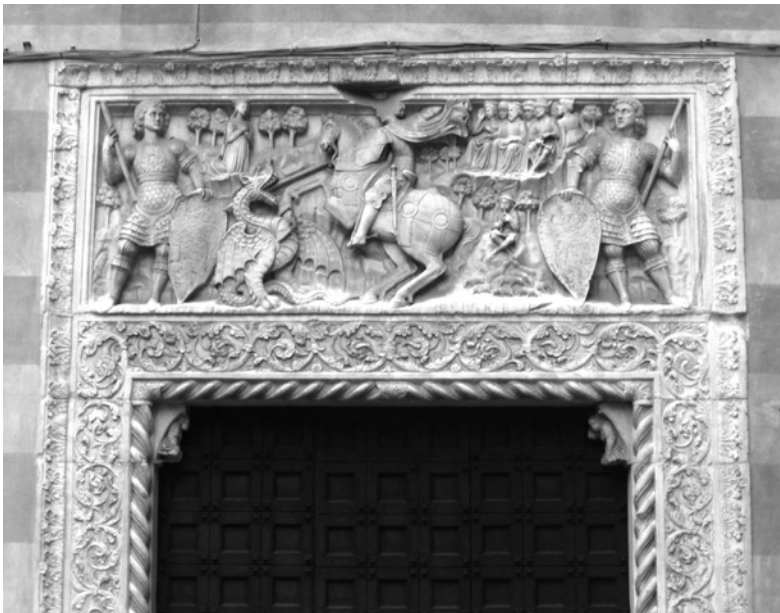


FIGURE 63 *Giovanni Gagini, Saint George Slaying the Dragon, carved soprapporta (door lintel), 1457, Palazzo Giorgio Doria, Piazza San Matteo, 14. Photo: G. Gorse.*



FIGURE 64

Palazzo Lamba Doria, Piazza San Matteo, mid-thirteenth century, presented to admiral Lamba Doria after his great victory over Venice at the Battle of Curzola in 1298.

Photo: G. Gorse.



FIGURE 65

Torre degli Embriaci, early twelfth century. Photo: Superchilum, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Torre_degli_Embriaci_Genova.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 66 *Dolceacqua, view with Doria fortress (twelfth to fourteenth centuries) and bridge (fifteenth century).* Photo: Dongio, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dolceacqua38_-_Panorama_del_paese_vecchio.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.

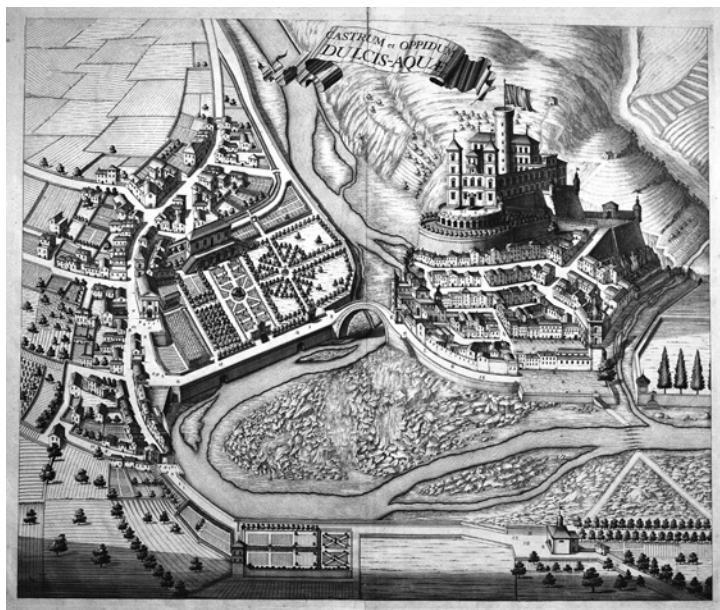


FIGURE 67 *Castrum et oppidum Dulcis-Aquae [castle and town of Dolceacqua], engraving, second half of the seventeenth century.* Photo: Collezione Topografica del Comune, Genoa.



FIGURE 68 *Benedictine abbey of San Fruttuoso di Capodimonte.* Photo: Twice25, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abbazia_di_San_Fruttuoso_di_Camogli-DSCFo662.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 69 *Tombs of the Doria family dating 1275–1305 in the crypt of San Fruttuoso di Capodimonte.* Photo: Twice25, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abbazia_di_San_Fruttuoso_di_Camogli-DSCFo719.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 70

Cogorno, San Salvatore dei Fieschi, thirteenth century. Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cogorno-basilica_dei_Fieschi-strutturai.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 71 *Cogorno, Palazzo Fieschi, thirteenth century.* Photo: Davide Papalini, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cogorno-IMG_0006.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 72 *Villa Boccanegra* of capitano del popolo *Guglielmo Boccanegra*, ca. 1251, amplified by doge perpetuo *Simone Boccanegra* ca. 1359; *Santa Tecla*, *Genoa*. Photo: Archivio Fotografico del Comune di Genova.



FIGURE 73 *Villa Tomati* in the *Val Polcevera*, ca. 1450, with late-fifteenth-century additions. Photo: Archivio Fotografico del Comune di Genova.



FIGURE 74 *Villa Cattaneo-Imperiale in Terralba, ca. 1495–1502, with mid-sixteenth-century additions. Photo: Archivio Fotografico del Comune di Genova.*



FIGURE 75 *Jan van Eyck, Dresden Triptych: Madonna and Child with the Archangel Michael and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, 1437, inner wings, probably commissioned for the Giustiniani family of Genoa, who maintained an active commercial presence in Bruges: Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden. Photo: Hans-Peter Klut, courtesy Art Resource.*



FIGURE 76 Pontremoli, *Santissima Annunziata*, altarpiece of the Virgin and Child with the four evangelists, ca. 1470. Photo: Algeri and De Floriani, *La pittura in Liguria: Il Quattrocento* (Genoa, 1992).



FIGURE 77

Bruges, Saaihalle (Genoese loggia, now the Frietmuseum), built 1399–1441. Photo: Ludvig14, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bruges_Saaihalle_9277_CH29895.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 78 *Bruges, Saaihalle, sopraporta relief of Saint George and the dragon, early fifteenth century. Photo: Reiner Halama, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brügge-Genuese_Lodge-29895-58219.jpg?uselang=nl, accessed 25 August 2017.*



FIGURE 79 *Genoese fortress of Caffa (now Feodosia) in the Crimea, viewed from the Black Sea, second half of the fourteenth century.* Photo: Sergei Odiyanenko, Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Генуэзская_крепость_XIV_ст.,_вид_с_Феодосийской_бухты_\(3\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Генуэзская_крепость_XIV_ст.,_вид_с_Феодосийской_бухты_(3).JPG), accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 80 *Genoese fortress and church of Saint John the Baptist, Caffa, second half of the fourteenth century.* Photo: Qypchak, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Genoese_Fortress_in_Caffa.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 81 *Genoese fortress of Cembalo (now part of Balaklava) in the Crimea, late fourteenth century.* Photo: Denis Vitchenko, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Генуезька_фортеця_Чембало_14-15ст.,_м.Балаклава,_Крим.JPG, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 82 *View from the Bosphorus of the Galata Tower, built by the Genoese in 1348 in their quarter of Pera (also called Galata), Constantinople (now Istanbul).* Photo: Mark Ahsmann, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:20131205_Istanbul_168.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 83

Galata Tower, Pera, Istanbul. Photo: Jorge Láscar, Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Galata_Tower_\(67m.\)_\(8396776708\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Galata_Tower_(67m.)_(8396776708).jpg), accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 84

The consul's tower in the Genoese fortress of Soldaia (now Sudak) in the Crimea, second half of the fourteenth century. Photo: Insider, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Consular_Castle.jpg, accessed 25 August 2017.



FIGURE 85 *The Genoese fortress of Soldaia, second half of the fourteenth century.* Photo: Artem Topchiy, Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2006-06-15_Вид_на_Генуэзскую_крепость_\(2\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2006-06-15_Вид_на_Генуэзскую_крепость_(2).jpg), accessed 25 August 2017.

Visual Culture and Artistic Exchange

Rebecca Müller

In the eyes of modern visitors versed in art history, the cathedral of Genoa must appear remarkable in that many of its structural elements and furnishings point to a foreign context. Standing before the cathedral, such visitors behold a double-towered façade (fig. 24) inspired by the French prototypes of Gothic architecture, albeit in an unexpected polychromatic execution and reminiscent in its portal decoration of Romanesque churches in southern France and Spain.¹ A massive ancient cornice stone probably imported from Rome² serves as the lintel of a side portal. Moving inside, viewers come upon Byzantine murals and learn from older descriptions that a bronze chandelier from Almoravid Spain and iron pieces of Pisan catapults once hung here. In the cathedral's treasury, they can marvel at a glass bowl from Caesarea and at cross-shaped reliquaries of Byzantine manufacture. The architectural decoration is attributed to stonemasons from Lombardy, the largest sepulchral chapel to Pisan masters. The rich sculptural decoration and the murals in the chapel of the Baptist were produced by Ticinese, Lucchese, and Brescian masters. Other buildings in Genoa could also be cited in order to illustrate why imports and cultural transfer, adaptation and assimilation are regarded as the chief characteristics of Genoa's visual culture and why some authors even consider Genoa to be "unique in the medieval world [in its] extraordinary capacity for assimilation."³ This view of the cathedral also makes clear why it is difficult to speak of "Genoese art," in the sense of a locally produced art that is genuinely rooted in a particular location and identifiable as such on account of a common stylistic idiom.

We do not know what reactions the cathedral's heterogeneous aesthetics might have elicited around the year 1300. A church façade that dominated

1 On the cathedral façade see also chaps. 9, pp. 224–26, and 12, p. 345. For their advice on this chapter, I am very grateful to Ralf Behrwald and Lorenz Korn.

2 This theory (Müller, *Sic hostes*, 34–46) is now supported by the fact that another cornice reused in Genoa was originally part of the architectural decoration of the Baths of Caracalla in Rome; see Jenewein, *Architekturdekoration*, 2, pl. 130–1; also 175–6. It is plausible that all four cornices reused in Genoese portals came from Rome.

3 "Unico nel medioevo ... [nella sua] straordinaria capacità di assimilazione"; Naser Eslami, *Genova*, 21.

the townscape probably ceased to appear “foreign” after two generations, while the treasures already possessed a special aesthetic status on account of their materials and their presentation as precious objects. The question of how the imported Islamic objects were perceived is just as interesting as it is difficult to answer. In a seaport in which many Muslims lived as slaves and whose merchants traveled in thousands to the coasts of North Africa as well as to the Levant and the Black Sea, clear distinctions must be drawn according to the experiences of various social groups.⁴ One should also be aware that in the period after 1284, a community of thousands of imprisoned Pisans lived in Genoa—and was even involved, as it seems, in the production of illuminated books.⁵ Medieval Genoa was a multiethnic and multicultural city, so any reflection on the “public” must always take the large number and diversity of foreigners as well as their different social statuses into account.⁶

Only a rough idea of the complex relationship between perception and identity can be gained from these reflections. Having said this, the transcultural diversity of the visual artifacts still holds out the prospect that the study of the processes of transfer and transformation, of adaptation and assimilation, will yield a valuable perspective on Genoa. A history of art based solely on artists’ biographies and the mere recording of “influences” will be much less profitable in this environment.

The following pages will focus on the artists who came to Genoa, and on the objects and materials that reached the city by many different paths. To that end, we must first ask who was responsible for commissioning particular artists from outside the city, for importing certain goods, and what their motivation was. How was the “foreign” adapted, remodeled to fit the circumstances, or even rejected? How should we assess the agency of imported objects and wandering artists—did they change their status or meaning by crossing cultural borders? How may we ascertain their impact on the urban public sphere? How is the role of Genoa in the movement of people and artifacts to be assessed? Did it function as a kind of melting pot that was mainly concerned with absorbing, blending, and creating something new or does the evidence point to various dynamics of interchange?

The structure of this chapter is primarily chronological, as the processes of artistic transfer must be understood against the background of Genoa’s political, economic, and cultural history—the connotations attached to imports

4 Van Doosselaere notes that “several thousand Genoese” became engaged in long-distance trade (*CASD*, 79n36).

5 Fabbri, “Romanzi.”

6 Petti Balbi, “Presenze straniere”; Naser Eslami, *Genova*, 73–134 (esp. 91–2).

from areas under Islamic rule in the twelfth century, for instance, might be quite different from those of the fifteenth century. Given its synthetic character, this overview of the processes pertaining to adaptation, the constitution of meaning, and perception can afford no more than partial insights, and it should be pointed out that this method only addresses the “local” in relation to the “foreign.” The spectrum of issues discussed ranges from the *magistri antelami* and imports from the Islamic world to the works of Byzantine artists and the fascination with early Netherlandish painting.

This analysis combines various methodological approaches. As a study of Genoa's visual culture, it forms part of a history of seeing that will emphasize the historical contingency of the production of meaning by examining how perception was shaped by non-local artists and artifacts. At the same time, and in keeping with recent studies of material culture, this contribution considers as cultural mediators not only “high art” and artists in the modern sense, but also objects that are not labelled as art.⁷ A comparative perspective in which Genoese art history is seen as a part of Mediterranean culture will also prove particularly fruitful. As a cultural sphere, the Mediterranean should not be viewed as a homogeneous and static whole but as a composite of multiple landscapes that were in turn subject to historical dynamics with regard to their borders and overlaps.⁸ As a sphere of trade, politics, and warfare, the Mediterranean is of fundamental importance for understanding Genoa's visual culture. But as the Mediterranean is not a closed system either, the network of artistic relations that encompassed Genoa was far more extended. The Persian pottery reused in the cathedral tympanum and the Genoese patrons who patronized Byzantine artists in the Black Sea colonies are just two cases in point. Thus this chapter may be situated in the framework of a geohistory of art, in dealing not only with Genoa as a place of artworks, but with the spatial references created by objects pointing to distant places.⁹ It calls attention to artifacts as the results of processes of transformation and negotiation in dynamic, not necessarily territorially fixed, contexts.

Material evidence mainly from the period of Byzantine rule (AD 538–643) and from the eleventh century onward includes not only imported pottery that attests to Genoa's trade relations with North Africa and the Near East, but

7 Miller, *Cultural Histories*; Saurma-Jeltsch, “Agency”; Grossman/Walker, *Mechanisms of Exchange*, 14–15.

8 Naser Eslami, *Genova*, esp. 33–42; for stimulating views on this topic, see the introduction to Grossman/Walker, *Mechanisms of Exchange*; Baader and Wolf, “Sea-to-Shore Perspective.”

9 See the introduction to DaCosta Kaufmann, *Time and Place*.

also the remnants of sculptural decorations that were either imported from Constantinople or manufactured on the spot by traveling Greek workshops.¹⁰ The eleventh century witnessed the immigration of corporately-organized stonemasons from the Valle d'Intelvi, near Como. These took up residence in Genoa as *magistri antelami* (after "Antelamus", a toponym of the aforementioned valley), and, while they maintained ties to their homeland, they established a long-standing monopoly on stone-cutting and building construction. As a subsequently "local" phenomenon, their occupation formed the basis of ecclesiastical and private building activities.¹¹ Di Fabio has shown that this process cannot be construed as "Lombard influence," but rather that the local materials used, the stone work, and the building techniques attest to the existence of distinctive workshops. In spite of their origins, the *magistri antelami* shaped an architecture that can be characterized as "Genoese", whereas the nature of Genoa's sculptural legacy remains heterogeneous.¹² In fact, the *magistri antelami* are not documented as sculptors, and Gandolfo has even argued that sculpture as a genuine, local phenomenon "was choked by the resounding presence of the corporation [the *magistri*] in the realm of architecture."¹³

The evidence from the twelfth century documents the importation of objects that can be classified as ancient *spolia* and Islamic treasures. Only the latter can be addressed here. This was the century in which the young city-state developed institutions of self-rule, received the right of coinage (1138), tripled the urban area through the erection of new city walls, became the seat of an archbishopric (1133), consolidated its rule over the Ligurian coast, and successfully participated in crusades to the Holy Land as well as in the Spanish *Reconquista*.

Islamic Artifacts as Trophies?

The chronicler William of Tyre records that, following the conquest of Caesarea in the year 1101, the Genoese removed a dish deep green in color from a mosque and brought it to Genoa, where it was presented to the cathedral.¹⁴ The

10 Frondoni, "Bisanzio e l'Occidente," 15.

11 Recently, Zoni, "Magistri antelami."

12 Di Fabio, "La cattedrale, il romanico," esp. 114.

13 Gandolfo, "Antelami, Magistri," underlines the "percorso disorganico, privo di una connotazione locale, che ebbe la scultura a Genova, tra il sec. 12° e il 14°, soffocata dalla preponderante presenza della corporazione in campo edilizio" (69).

14 William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, 471; see most recently Ameri, "Naturalia."

object in question is the so-called *Sacro Catino*, a glass bowl roughly 40 cm wide (fig. 46) that is still kept in the cathedral treasury; it is so unique that scholars are still uncertain whether it was manufactured in antiquity or—more probably—during the early Islamic period.¹⁵ William also mentions that the bowl was shown as a marvel (*quasi pro miraculo*) to high-ranking travelers, who were told that it was made of emerald.

A bronze chandelier—probably a damascened mosque lamp decorated with Arabic script—and a pair of bronze doors were among the spoils brought home by the Genoese following the capture of Almoravid Almería in 1147. Even though both objects are only mentioned in later sources and were lost during the modern period, their existence in Genoa must be regarded as credible.¹⁶ From the time of its arrival, the chandelier may have hung near the altar of John the Baptist, which became one of the focal points of religious and urban identity following the *furtum sacrum* (“holy theft”) of the saint’s ashes from Myra in 1099.¹⁷ The bronze doors were incorporated into San Giorgio, the church of the city’s patron Saint George, in which the Genoese army’s banner was also stored.¹⁸ Although unmentioned in the extant sources, two marble plaques inscribed with Kufic letters survive in the nave of Santa Maria di Castello, near which several noble families that were deeply involved in the crusades (such as the Embriaci) once resided. While one of the plaques is now illegible, the other (fig. 17) carries verses from the third sura of the Koran. Another Arabic inscription, now lost, is mentioned in the eighteenth century as located near the portal of San Sisto, a church notably founded to commemorate the conquest of the North African city of Mahdia.¹⁹

The aforementioned objects were ripped out of their original religious and cultural contexts.²⁰ Their unusual form and workmanship as well as their Arabic inscriptions, which some were undoubtedly able to read, must have identified them as “Saracen” artifacts. Once in Genoa, they were given a religiously determined, Christian context—it may not be by accident that no such object is connected to the city gates—and therefore an observer could perceive them as trophies in a religious conflict.²¹ Whether they were perceived as

15 *CSL*, 392–3 (Ameri).

16 Müller, *Sic hostes*, 204–7.

17 Polonio, “L’arrivo delle ceneri.”

18 Müller, *Sic hostes*, 63–4.

19 Haug, *Annales*, 233–6.

20 See also Müller, “Genova vittoriosa,” 96.

21 Haug, *Annales*, 244n706, rightly points out that the sources do not speak of signs of victory over an inimical religion.

actual incarnation of the “infidels,” however, is open to debate.²² The fact that the *Sacro Catino* was exhibited “as a kind of marvel” points to an aesthetic appreciation going beyond its symbolic value as a trophy. Only because of their presentation in a new visual context were these objects able to appear special or even unique—which they had not been in their original Islamic context. Shalem describes this altered perspective as an “‘aesthetisation’ by way of exhibition.”²³

In this respect, the Islamic artifacts in Genoa are comparable to numerous objects of similar provenance that found their way into Western churches along many different paths. One can only assume that some of these were the “trophies of a victorious religion,” as were the bells which Muslims captured in Christian Spain.²⁴ The specificity and longevity of collective memory on this topic in Genoa is singular enough to be noteworthy, as the association of specific non-military artifacts with victorious wars in early modern sources and even in a text dating as early as the twelfth century is very rare.

Once in Genoa, these objects became part of a multimedia promotion of the victorious city-state that was mediated through texts and images. A political and ideological rhetoric that expressed itself in the pithy inscriptions of the Porta Soprana (figs. 4–5)²⁵, in an idealizing historiography, and in depictions of the crusades inside the cathedral all helped shape the collective *memoria* in favor of the legitimation of the ruling class.

The way that perception of an object changes when that which the beholder wishes to see in it changes—and thus the extent to which ‘meaning’ is constructed and inscribed—is made abundantly clear by the rich tradition that arose around the *Sacro Catino*, which is quite unique for such an object. Its status of trophy receded into the background. Probably used initially in the Ash Wednesday liturgy (although apparently only for a short time)²⁶, the thirteenth-century Genoese subsequently believed it to be the dish which Jesus used at the Last Supper, until Jacopo da Varagine’s chronicle of Genoa eventually identified it as the Holy Grail.²⁷ The *Catino* thus acquired a new meaning in Genoa. In Jacopo’s eyes, however, it also gave the city a new meaning, that of a community willed by God.

22 Müller, “Percezione.”

23 Shalem, *Islam Christianized*, 131.

24 Dodds, “Great Mosque,” 18.

25 Cf. chaps. 8, pp. 195–6, and 12, pp. 347–8.

26 Müller, “Sacro catino.”

27 Ameri, “*Naturalia*”; Haug, *Annales*, 241–6.

The objects that could count as trophies remained isolated, whereas the numerous ceramics (or so-called *bacini*) that were used not only in the decoration of Genoese churches but also elsewhere in Italy have not so far been shown to carry such a connotation. Genoese trade links with Islamic countries—as for example in the silk trade—fluctuated but were never entirely severed. Furthermore, pottery from the Islamic world used as tableware by the Genoese elite attests to the continued presence of Islamic culture in Genoa.²⁸

When considering the role of Islamic objects in the visual culture of Genoa, it is remarkable—especially compared to Pisa, Venice, or even Florence—that the Genoese preferred as mementoes of past victories not formally more generic antiquities but rather objects that were clearly attributable on account of specific outward characteristics (e.g., Arabic writing). This also applies to the objects which Genoa captured from the Pisans and Venetians in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Of these trophies, only the harbor chains of Porto Pisano can be addressed here.²⁹

The Omnipresence of Victory and Defeat

As early as 1287, or so the Genoese annals claim, the Genoese robbed pieces of chains and catapults from the Pisan harbor *in signum victoriae* (“as a sign of victory”) and hung them up in San Lorenzo.³⁰ In the year 1290, the Genoese fleet then succeeded in destroying the harbor facilities. The broken harbor chain was brought back to Genoa as a token of victory. As a trophy, the chain was somewhat special in that it could be displayed in more than one location. Sections of it were hung up at the municipal palace (the Palazzo San Giorgio), on two city gates, and at no less than eleven churches in Genoa, Murta, and Moneglia (fig. 55). Every piece was accompanied by other media (inscriptions and images) that helped shape the memory of a victory that had in reality been of little strategic importance. One exceptional monument is a marble relief, now in the Museo di Sant’Agostino, with a depiction of Porto Pisano, which shows the port with the chains still intact (fig. 56). The victory is documented

28 Di Fabio, “Capselle eburnee”; Mannoni and Gardini, “Laggioni,” 53–5; on Genoa as the “main transit station” of the silk trade: Jacoby, “Silk Economics,” 218; for the pottery: Benete, “La cucina.”

29 Müller, *Sic hostes*, 72–83.

30 *Ferra de trabucis et chatena: AGC* for 1287–8, 5, 77–88; Müller, *Sic hostes*, 100 and 219. On the following, Müller, “Genova vittoriosa,” 103. On their significance for the 1284 Battle of Meloria, see chap. 16, pp. 465–6.

by an inscription on the relief itself and by the chain links that originally hung alongside the relief. Due to their omnipresence, the Pisan harbor chains are mentioned in numerous descriptions of the city. The manner in which they were meant to be perceived was clearly recognized by the Florentine diplomat and scholar Giannozzo Manetti. Writing in 1435–6, he described how “they (i.e., the Genoese) hung the chains up at the city’s most busy places, thus for instance at the entrance of their own harbor und quite high up on the city gates; they suspended them [there] in memory of the vanquished enemies, so that all those who entered the city by sea or by land should see them, even against their will.”³¹ The Pisans who were held captive in Genoa most certainly saw the chains against their will. All in all, this serves as a particularly eloquent example of how perception and social condition affect one another.

The Façade of San Lorenzo

In its choice of exemplars, the execution of the work, and the materials employed, the cathedral of Genoa (figs. 22–39) remains one of the most impressive architectural examples of the processes of artistic transfer and adaptation.³² At least a brief outline of the problems related to its façade should be given here. For unknown reasons, the Romanesque building remained unfinished. Those responsible for the project—primarily the representatives of the commune that financed the building, and to a lesser extent the canons and the bishop—opted for a radically different solution with a new façade (figs. 24–9), which was erected around 1220 and incorporated into the Romanesque building. It has long been understood that the architectural complex could not have been realized without knowledge of the west façade of Chartres (1145/1150; fig. 23).³³ The two cathedrals share the same structural shape with three stepped lancet-arched portals, where the central one is broader and higher. The columns set into the jambs are continued between the portals. Even the typology of the two-towered façade is borrowed from Chartres. However, the Genoese portal is more restrained in its sculptural decoration. The archivolts and jambs contain no figures; rather, the main portal is decorated with doorjamb reliefs. Only the tympanum of the main portal exhibits sculptures, which again follow the French prototype in their depiction of the *Maestas Domini* (Christ in Majesty, fig. 27). The rendering of the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence, on the other hand,

31 Manetti, *Elogi*, 110.

32 For the most recent assessment, see *CSL*.

33 Claussen, “Portale,” 90–92.

would have been unimaginable in northern France. The entirely naked figure of the tortured saint is set directly above the lintel, almost in resistance to an intellectual model.³⁴ Comparable in turn are the figure holding a sundial at Chartres and a single column figure in Genoa, the so-called *Arrotino*³⁵, both of which stand outside the jambs.

Slightly later northern French exemplars have also been debated by scholars. Chiefly, the cathedral of Rouen (ca. 1170/1180) has been cited, especially with regard to the socle (plinth) reliefs and the architectural decoration, along with the cathedrals of Mantes (1180) and Lisieux and Noyon (both around 1200).³⁶ In addition to the models provided by northern French architecture, it is important to note that other features of San Lorenzo find parallels in Romanesque churches, as for instance the decoration of the archivolts, the use of different-colored stone types, and the twisted columns. Parallels include the northern Spanish cathedrals of Lérida (Catalonia) and Orense (Castile), as well as the collegiate church of Avallon (Burgundy) and the cathedral of Le Puy (Auvergne).³⁷ What is most relevant, however, is not whether these latter examples constitute specific prototypes, but the fact that the phenomenon of the façade of San Lorenzo cannot be explained on the basis of a monocausal model. The building materials alone make this abundantly clear. In employing the local gray *pietra di Promontorio* only in the socle, the construction broke with local tradition. Instead, the façade is dominated by a polychromy that combines white Carrara marble, “Rosso di Levante” (a pink limestone from La Spezia), and green serpentinite from the Ligurian Apennines.³⁸ These materials are woven into a carpet-like pattern made up of alternating stone courses and small inlaid work (fig. 29). We cannot be certain whether this represented a conscious borrowing from the decorative traditions of Islamic cultures or was meant to demonstrate total mastery without any reference to its origins. The sculpture of the tympanum was partly polychromed and decorated with mosaics, of which only remnants have been preserved. The crown of Saint Lawrence contains fragments of Byzantine blue glass, pottery from Egypt, and figuratively painted Minai ware from Persia (fig. 28).³⁹ The fact that a fragment decorated with a human face was put right in the center makes it clear that this was not an arbitrary recycling of materials, but a conscious consideration

34 In another context, see Castelnovo and Ginzburg, “Centro,” 340.

35 Possibly John the Evangelist; see *CSL*, 199–200 (Di Fabio).

36 Di Fabio, “Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230,” 63–5; Cervini, *Portali*; Claussen, “Zentrum,” 675–6.

37 Di Fabio, “Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230,” 63–5, and “Porfidi.”

38 Mannoni, “Marmi”; Di Fabio, “Architettura” and “Porfidi.”

39 Gardini, “Tessere.”

of imagery. The materials represent a kaleidoscope of Genoese trade routes and of the exploitation of local quarries. They represent both the local and the Mediterranean dimensions of the building, which in this form is only imaginable in Genoa.⁴⁰

The French impact has attracted different explanations. Di Fabio has identified two dominant masters. One of these, who supervised the construction process with the expertise of a master builder and sculptor, is said to have been active in Chartres and Rouen and then to have carried out the work on the tympanum and the *Arrotino*.⁴¹ The other master, who was responsible for the reliefs in the upper part of the socle and in the doorjambs, is characterized by experiences gathered in Mantes and Senlis and by his knowledge of metalworking.⁴² The notion that foreigners should have made the decision to employ local materials that were often difficult to work with is certainly intriguing.⁴³ Claussen agrees that the person in charge of the construction project was French, but rules out such an origin for the sculptures, with the exception of those on the doorjamb and socle reliefs. He proposes a competitive situation in which the Italian workshop strove to outdo the one that had been brought in from France by its handling of exquisite materials. The contracting authorities would have given preference to the Italians, which would also explain the small number of sculptural elements.⁴⁴ In my own opinion, there is no compelling reason to assume that the Christ in Majesty relief was the work of sculptors from France, although that is clearly true for a large number of the socle reliefs.⁴⁵ In my view, the issue of “nationalities” is less interesting than the compilatory and informed approach⁴⁶, which, in spite of an obvious predominance of French prototypes, was nevertheless able to produce a distinctive synthesis that could be termed “Genoese.”

The question of why the contracting authorities looked to France cannot be answered with certainty due to the paucity of the sources. Scholars have pointed to the historical circumstances in which this orientation corresponded to political interests, notably Genoa's rivalry with Venice.⁴⁷ San Marco was richly adorned with spoils from Constantinople (looted in 1204)

40 Di Fabio, “Porfidi,” 154–5, and “*Opus francigenum*,” 267.

41 *CSL*, 204–6 (Di Fabio).

42 Di Fabio, “Porfidi,” 160–61, and “Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230.”

43 Di Fabio, “Porfidi,” 156–8.

44 Claussen, “Portale,” 89–94; Claussen, “Zentrum,” 673–5.

45 *CSL*, 176–80 (Di Fabio).

46 I would like to thank Martin Büchsel for a stimulating discussion of this point.

47 Di Fabio, “Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230,” 64–5.

probably around the same time as the façade of San Lorenzo was built. The competitive situation alone—rather than any specific occasion—could explain why Genoa's newly adopted architectural design strove to surpass (and not to imitate) its rival through the richness of its own building materials *and* with a “new” architecture—the likes of which could only be found in France, and which would achieve the greatest possible effect in a relatively confined space.⁴⁸ With regard to the aesthetics of the materials, the building's point of reference is San Marco and not the French Gothic style.

The façade of San Lorenzo thus should not be understood as the outcome of a simple bilateral transfer. Irrespective of the actual origin of the artists, it can be characterized as the result of a process of negotiation. The imagery that conveys the main theological message, the sculptures in the tympanum, can be described as artistically hybrid if we understand hybridity as a mixture where the single elements of different cultural contexts are not completely absorbed by the new, but remain perceivable in the new whole. Of course the question remains—perceivable to whom and for how long? After how many generations is the power of an artifact to refer to places, objects and events distant in both time and space lost or overlaid by new references? The question of how the orientation to northern France was initiated in the first place cannot be answered with certainty. Di Fabio was able to prove that a *magister Ianuensis* (“Genoese master”) worked in the royal palace of Paris in 1239, albeit in an unknown field.⁴⁹

While the effects of the French presence are recognizable in the architectural decoration and in the works of goldsmiths, matters become more complex in art commissions where the patrons apparently explicitly voted against this model.⁵⁰ Such is the case with San Salvatore dei Fieschi (fig. 70), a church located near Cogorno that was commissioned by cardinal Ottobuono Fieschi (later Pope Hadrian V) in the years before 1276.⁵¹ The cardinal, who had been a canon at the cathedrals of Reims and Paris, an ambassador in London, and an archdeacon in Parma, chose local construction workshops and did not commission specialized sculptors. The architectonic decoration both outside and inside the church does not feature the French idiom. Di Fabio attributed this “anti-modern artistic option” to the peripheral, non-urban situation of the site, which might result in a different level of ambition or a “linguistic register”

48 Claussen, “Zentrum,” 672–3. Of course, “new” here is geographically relative, as the west façade of Chartres (fig. 23) was two generations old at this point.

49 Di Fabio, “Cattedrale fra 1200 e 1230,” 66–7, and “L'art gotique,” 33.

50 Di Fabio, “L'art gotique,” 35.

51 Dagnino, “San Salvatore dei Fieschi.”

targeted to a local audience. The faster progress made by stonemasons who were already available on site could also have played a role.⁵² In our context it is important to realize that even for an important project—the Fieschi church played an eminent role as a place of family identity—patrons resist neat adherence to models, however prominent and compelling these may seem to us.

Byzantium in Genoa

Di Fabio has discussed the cultural and artistic relations between Genoa and Byzantium, which must be viewed within the larger framework of intensive economic exchange and the political circumstances that are closely associated with it.⁵³ Two objects testifying to these relations, but with different significances, will be addressed here.

The earliest inventory of the cathedral treasury, which dates from the year 1386, already mentions a red *palium* (cloth; Italian *pallio*) with the lives of the saints Lawrence, Hippolytus, and Sixtus, which still exists today (fig. 47). It consists of a rectangular piece of red silk of impressive size (1.32 × 3.77 m), embroidered with silk and precious metal thread. It not only depicts scenes from the lives of the saints, but also a prominently centered representation of the Byzantine emperor Michael (whom a caption identifies by name) being led into the Genoese church by Saint Lawrence. In 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259–82) concluded an agreement with Genoa that granted the city wide-ranging trade privileges. In return, the latter pledged to assist Michael in his bid to reconquer Constantinople. Following the recapture of the city, a eulogy of the emperor delivered on Christmas Day in 1261 or 1265 by Manuel Holobolos contains a detailed description of two *peploi* (cloths) which the monarch allegedly presented to the Genoese emissaries: one with a representation of the emperor and the one that still exists. It is thus highly probable that the cloth was manufactured in Nicaea sometime between the arrival of the emissaries in autumn 1260 and their departure in March 1261.⁵⁴ When the emperor commissioned the *pallio* during the negotiations, he must have felt quite confident, as the representations only make sense if the cloth was

52 “Opzione artistica ... marcatamente anti-moderna,” “registro linguistico”; Di Fabio, “Scultura del Duecento,” 292–3.

53 Di Fabio, “Bisanzio e Genova”; Schreiner, “Bisanzio e Genova”; Origone, “Realtà.”

54 *CSL*, 410–13 (Wolf); Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 27–87 (p. 43: 1265). See also discussion in chap. 12, p. 350, as well as the related discussion of the Palazzo San Giorgio in chap. 9, pp. 230–1. On the 1261 Treaty of Nymphaeum, see chaps. 17, p. 490, and 18, p. 507.

destined for Genoa. The *pallio* is dedicated to the cathedral's tutelary saint. The underlying *vita* is a Greek one, but the accompanying captions are in Latin.⁵⁵ The emperor's titulature in the caption refers to the Byzantines as "Greeks" and not as "Romaioi".⁵⁶ The Byzantine characteristics should also be emphasized, as for instance the domed structure that is meant to represent the cathedral. By showing how Lawrence leads the emperor into the *ecclesia Ianuensium* ("the church of the Genoese", as the caption says), the close relationship between emperor and city appears to constitute the primary focus of interest—but only at first glance. On the Genoese side, only the saint himself is at eye level with the emperor. As Hilsdale was able to show, the scene must be viewed in the narrative context of the saints' lives depicted, from which it is not formally distinguished. Scenes depicting acts of munificence and the handing over of objects are particularly numerous in the pictorial hagiographies on the *pallio*. In this "plot of largesse," a parallel is drawn between the saint and the monarch, who both act magnanimously.⁵⁷ Michael's piety and goodness stand in contrast to that of the "bad" emperor Decius. From the perspective of the Byzantines, the fact that Lawrence personally conducts the emperor into the church—by implication, handing it over to him—is an expression of their own superior position, from which the donation is being made. The *pallio* can thus be inserted into the Byzantine policy of largesse and "silken diplomacy."⁵⁸ In spite of its Latin captions, it is not an amalgam of Eastern and Western traditions, but a Byzantine artifact that was meant to convey, in a politically ambiguous situation, the message of Byzantine supremacy to its intended recipient: "it does not blur boundaries but rather inscribes difference."⁵⁹

Kalavrezou has recently made a further point by assessing the *pallio* as the object of a "shared cultural imagination." By emphasizing, for example, the rarity of the episodes from Saint Lawrence's life in Byzantium and the absence of an official portrait of the emperor, she underlined that it was "intended for a non-Byzantine viewer with a different aesthetic and cultural appreciation, and made with attention to that viewer ... at the same time it displays the features most desired and sought after by Westerners that are specifically Byzantine in

55 Toth, "Narrative Fabric."

56 Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 83–6.

57 Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 79.

58 Toth, "Narrative Fabric."

59 Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art*, 87. With regard to perception, this argument is more convincing than Kalavrezou's conclusion ("The Byzantine *Peplos*," 242), which seem to exclude ambivalence ("This peplos is thus an example of the kind of cross-cultural imagery of buildings and sites that with their symbolism are able to bridge cultural boundaries").

all their innate forms and materials.”⁶⁰ Thus the agency of this object indispensably depended on its mobility and circulation.

Unfortunately, the Genoese reaction to this gift is not recorded. Di Fabio's reflections regarding their understanding of the Byzantines' intent are probably accurate: “At Genoa ... no one made a show of recognizing it. With its ‘political content’ subverted and preset norms of communication overturned, the *pallio* was interpreted as a mere sign of recognition by a sovereign, as a friendly *xenion* [gift of hospitality].”⁶¹ It is perhaps no coincidence that the cloth on which only the emperor was depicted—and which probably bore far more explicit connotations of imperial dominion—was already missing in 1386, at least in the sacristy. Quite possibly, the preservation of the *pallio* as a unique testimony of Byzantine/Genoese relations is due to a willingness to forget its message.

Roughly half a century after the *pallio* had reached Genoa and apparently lost its political significance, another type of artistic transfer manifested itself—again in the cathedral. Around 1312, the cathedral was refurnished after a disastrous fire. Inside, it was painted with murals, of which four of fairly large-scale dimensions can still be seen (figs. 36–9). The western wall of the endonarthex (fig. 36) depicts *Christ in Majesty* (*Deesis*), in which Christ flanked by two angels is shown in the portal's recessed lunette, and thereby highlighted. The northern wall depicts Saint George battling the dragon (fig. 37); he is accompanied by the saints Peter and John the Baptist, while from above an angel hands him a shield painted with a cross and the arms of Genoa. Below this, the lunette of the Porta San Giovanni contains an *imago pietatis* (“image of piety”), in which Christ as the Man of Sorrows is flanked by Mary and John the Baptist (fig. 38).⁶² On the opposite side wall, the lunette of the Porta San Gottardo (fig. 39) contains a depiction of Mary *Eleousa* (i.e., caressing the infant Christ), accompanied by Saint Nicholas of Myra and Saint Lawrence. Scholars agree that these paintings are the work of a Byzantine master: the proportions of the figures, the effort to create dynamic poses and to infuse movement into the clothing, the use of vivid colors, numerous elements of Byzantine iconography, and the Greek captions for the apostles all support an attribution to a Byzantine painter trained in a major center of artistic production.⁶³ Further,

60 Kalavrezou, “The Byzantine *Peplos*,” 213–4.

61 “A Genova ... nessuno fece mostra di rendersene conto. Sovvertitone il ‘contenuto politico’, ribaltati i codici di comunicazione predeterminati, il pallio fu interpretato come un mero segno di riconoscenza del sovrano, come un amichevole *xénion*”; Di Fabio, “Bisanzio a Genova,” 65.

62 *CSL*, 253 (Bacci).

63 Nelson, “Byzantine Icons,” 79 and “Byzantine Painter”; *CSL*, 527–8 (Bacci).

a “master Marcus the Greek, painter from Constantinople” is indeed attested in Genoa in the year 1313.⁶⁴ The iconography of the paintings is essentially Byzantine, but modified to accommodate Western pictorial traditions and local requirements.⁶⁵ This becomes particularly evident in the mural of Saint George (fig. 37). The Dragon Rider is in keeping with Byzantine pictorial tradition, but the handing over of the city’s coat of arms by an angel is unusual and seems to stem from an ad-hoc invention. The city’s patron saint receives his protection directly from heaven, thereby implying that the city itself stands under divine protection.⁶⁶ Further, unthinkable for Byzantium is the rendering of Saint Peter, who was venerated as the legendary founder of the diocese of Genoa. His prominent positioning conveyed the message of an autonomous Genoese Church, while its subjection to the archbishop of Milan until 1133 was disregarded.⁶⁷ In a singular manner, the saint is shown carrying the model of a church in the form of a donor portrait, thereby modifying the traditional iconography of Saint Peter. To this specific arrangement belongs the saint opposite Peter, John the Baptist, whose veneration became a focal point of local civic identity. The image thus can be interpreted in the context of the efforts of archbishop Jacopo da Varagine and his confidants, who, following civil unrest in the city in 1294–5, strove to propagate a conception of Genoa as a community legitimized by divine support and to emphasize its common roots.⁶⁸

The adjustments to Latin theological concepts are also significant. The depiction of the instruments of the Passion, which actually stem from the pictorial context of the *Hetoimasia* (the Eastern pictorial convention of the Throne of the Second Coming), accentuates Christ’s suffering.⁶⁹ The fact that Mary is shown alongside a second figure of Christ is owed to Western Marian devotion.⁷⁰ The patrons may have been thinking of a representation of the Coronation of the Virgin where Mary would sit on a throne together with her son. But as John the Baptist is depicted on the other side of Christ, the iconography of the *Deesis* (*Christ in Majesty*) is taken up, and this leads to surprising numerical asymmetry among the apostles. The frescoes thus attest to the Greek painter’s ability to adapt his pictorial forms to Western circumstances,

64 Nelson, “Byzantine Painter,” 555.

65 Nelson, “Byzantine Painter.”

66 *CSL*, 256 (Bacci).

67 Nelson, “Byzantine Icons,” 86–7.

68 Di Fabio, “Sculptura bronzea” and “Chiesa senza ‘palazzo,’” 311–15. On the crisis of the 1290s: chap. 5, pp. 115–16.

69 Nelson, “Byzantine Painter,” 558–9.

70 *Ibid.*, 561–3.

locations, and theological concepts. To use Nelson's formulation, the Greek artist "made Byzantine art Genoese."⁷¹ Moreover, the frescoes also document how much potential the commissioning authorities saw in Greek painting. According to Bacci, the artist represented "an example of the most recent and refined classicizing tendencies of painting in the Palaeologan age."⁷² Those who commissioned the paintings must have been aware of this, particularly since parts of the Genoese elite had some knowledge of current developments in Constantinople, notably through the colony in Pera. Genoese patrons here—like in the colonies on the Black Sea—commissioned Byzantine artists for their Latin churches.⁷³ It is thus conceivable that the aforementioned Marcus as well as a certain Demetrios—a painter from Pera whose presence in Genoa is documented for 1371—were not the only mediators of Byzantine art.⁷⁴

The murals in San Lorenzo can be characterized as a targeted and apparently one-sided transfer. It is not possible to determine in how much effect this commission with its sojourn in Genoa had on the Greek painter himself. The transformations noted above were most likely required by the patrons. Evidently, misunderstandings happened and were accepted. Regarding the question of why a Greek painter was chosen, the answer in my opinion lies not in the appropriation of a "foreign" idiom in the sense of "exoticism," as some of the beholders—the well-travelled mercantile elite of Genoese society—were acquainted with this pictorial language. The Greek icons that according to the sources could be found in the city, and whose schemata and aesthetics were partly adopted for the larger formats, must have been vested with a religious authority that was partially responsible for this decision.⁷⁵ It can only be guessed that the presence of the Byzantine murals also connoted the far-reaching relations that made possible the employment of such a painter. The murals could thus have been meant to shape civic identity not only by their iconography, but also by their allusion to the power to overcome spatial distance. Other works of art could also contribute to the discussion at this point, including those that have been lost and those belonging to categories such as sculpture, mosaic, and especially manuscript illumination. We can only mention here the *Sacro Volto* (the *Holy Face of Christ* or *Mandylion*, fig. 13), a Byzantine icon that reached Genoa sometime before 1388—a literally multi-layered object, the

71 Nelson, "Byzantine Icons," 80.

72 "Una delle piu recenti e raffinate tendenze classicheggianti della pittura di età paleologa"; Bacci, in *CSL*, 357.

73 Westphalen, "Pittori greci"; also Quirini-Popławski, "Échanges artistiques."

74 Di Fabio, "Bisanzio a Genova," 42–3.

75 Di Fabio, "Bisanzio a Genova," 58; Nelson, "Byzantine Icons," 87.

arrival of which was an event of major cultural and religious importance⁷⁶—and the arrival of a ship from endangered Pera in 1461, which brought with it a large number of reliquaries, textiles, and books. In summary, one can fully concur with Di Fabio, who emphasizes the profound difference between Genoese/Byzantine and Venetian/Byzantine relations in the field of art, the latter being much more characterized by imitation and competition. For Di Fabio, the frescoes in the cathedral represent a unique example of “Genoese Byzantinism”, in direct contrast to the *Pallio di San Lorenzo*, which was commissioned by the emperor to convey Byzantine superiority.⁷⁷

If we pass over the sculpture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, this should not suggest that the importance of artistic transfer declined. Rather, the contrary is true: with Giovanni Pisano’s funerary monument for Margaret of Brabant (fig. 43; ca. 1313), Genoa acquired the work of one of Italy’s leading sculptors. In the fifteenth century, important commissions were given to members of the Gagini and Riccomanni families of sculptors, Lombard in origin, who affiliated themselves with the forms and designs of the early Florentine Renaissance. Non-Genoese artists thus continued to dominate important projects, and striving for high quality still implied looking beyond Genoa. However, the final part of this study will examine Genoa’s artistic ties to Flanders in the field of painting. This will afford the possibility of reassessing issues of cultural transfer and visual culture in combination with Genoa’s status as a trade power, which allowed it to play a pioneering role in the introduction of early Netherlandish painting to Italy. An analysis of a few key examples will reveal not only art as the bearer of prestige and taste, but also artists as cultural mediators and artworks as agents—along with the issue of pictorial understanding in different visual cultures.

Flanders in Genoa

From the late fourteenth century onward, the centuries-old trade relations between the Genoese and northern France and Flanders intensified.⁷⁸ They followed the Atlantic route that connected Genoa with the north via its colonies

76 Dufour Bozzo, “Sacro Volto”; Calderoni Masetti, *Sacro Volto*. See also discussion in chap. 12, p. 350.

77 Di Fabio, “Bisanzio a Genova,” 41 and 65.

78 Petti Balbi, “Rapporti”; Di Fabio, “Mercato suntuario.” The trade with Flanders had extensive social and cultural repercussions; see chap. 11, p. 338; chap. 13, p. 389, and chap. 18, pp. 515–16.

in Spain and on Majorca—most notably with Bruges, which was accessible through a canal and which granted the Genoese wide-ranging trade privileges. Formally organized as a *natio*, members of the Genoese elite were active in trade, finance, and insurance in Bruges for many years (see figs. 77–8). This circle of laymen commissioned the leading Burgundian painters of the day to produce portable triptychs, portraits, and elaborate retables for their Ligurian home churches. Like the Flemish elite, these merchants emulated the forms of representation which they had observed at the Burgundian court and invested in objects that both in Bruges and Genoa held out the prospect not only of heavenly reward but also of worldly prestige. This included of course a wide range of media and genres, especially illuminated books, textiles, and metalwork.⁷⁹

The Genoese Lomellini and Giustiniani families were among the earliest Italians to commission works of art from Jan van Eyck, as witnessed for example by his Marian triptych in Dresden, which bears the arms of the *albergo* Giustiniani (fig. 75).⁸⁰ The court painter, who proclaims his authorship by applying his signature, has created a miniature-like object that conveys an impression of utmost preciousness through its use of intense colors as well as through its exquisite and highly detailed rendering of objects such as brocade fabrics, fur trim, and works of gold. Both Michele and Raffaele Giustiniani, members of the family resident in Bruges, have been proposed as donors.⁸¹

An indication that this work was seen at an early date in Genoa is provided by its possible reception.⁸² The panels are bordered by inscriptions with liturgical texts, which seem to be engraved or, for the middle panel, superimposed in letters of bronze; in fact, both sets of inscriptions are painted onto the frame in *trompe l'oeil*. A similar faux frame, with a circumferential inscription unusual in Italy, also appears on Donato de' Bardi's *Crucifixion* of about 1440 (fig. 40).⁸³ Van Eyck arranged his inscriptions as if they were intended for the painted saints, so that the letters on the lower border are put upside down for the viewer, whereas the signature directly above can be read correctly by us. Exactly the same visual strategies to present text within the image are adopted by de' Bardi. While his painting has an entirely different function and dimensions (its height alone is 2.38 m), it also exhibits a plateau-like foreground and

79 See the contributions in Boccardo and Di Fabio, *Genova e l'Europa atlantica*.

80 Parma, *Rapporti artistici*, 23–30; Ketelsen, *Geheimnis*.

81 Streeton, "Dresden Triptych."

82 Parma, "Genua," 97ff.; Algeri, "Testimonianze."

83 Pinacoteca Civica, Savona.

an atmospheric landscape that both suggest more than just a sketchy knowledge of early Netherlandish painting.

The early presence of Giustiniani's triptych in Genoa is also suggested by the Marian altar in the church of Santissima Annunziata in Pontremoli, a small city about forty-five miles from Genoa.⁸⁴ The altarpiece (fig. 76) depicts the inside of a church that is reminiscent of van Eyck in its structure, notably through its arcades of circular arches with multi-colored columns and sculptures of saints with Gothic canopies above them. Along with the black and white striation typical of local architecture, other differences in the conception of images are apparent. While Van Eyck develops a continuous representation of space with realistic details, the Italian painter not only follows a more ornamental conception of space but also broadly positions the throne of Mary *before* the church. The honorific attributes shown in Van Eyck's Mary are enriched by heavy haloes. Mary and the Christ Child thus acquire a higher degree of presence in the eyes of the beholder (and even more so through their direct gaze) and appear more dazzling in their magnificence and splendor. The church in general is the attribute that explains Mary *as* the Church. The realistic mode of representation in Van Eyck can be understood as means to intensify the meditation of the beholder, who is guided to look carefully. It goes along with a painstaking attention to detail that is not adopted in the polyptych. This is less indicative of a misunderstanding than of a reinterpretation, reflecting not only the paintings' very different functions but also the different visual cultures in which they were created.

The importation of Netherlandish paintings adds a new facet to the transfer processes already discussed. It occurred in the context of an intense interchange of ideas and goods, but as far as is traceable for Genoa, the imported artifacts were not adjusted to local needs. As something distinctively new, they apparently offered the possibility of gaining prestige by reference to commercial relations, financial power and, in the case of Jan van Eyck, access even to the Burgundian court painter. Thus the paintings' status changed due to their mobility. At least some viewers were well aware of the different characteristics shown by Netherlandish painters in comparison to Italian artists. This is proven by the fact that in his *De viris illustris* (1456), the Ligurian-born Bartolomeo Fazio clearly distinguishes between *italici* and *gallici* and their respective qualities, thus implying a connection between geography and artistic identity.⁸⁵

84 Parma, "Genua," 99.

85 Baxandall, "Faciis," 101, 103, 105.

Early Netherlandish painting seems to have reached Genoa primarily via imports, since only a few transalpine painters are documented in the city.⁸⁶ The most important known evidence for employment in Genoa itself—in fact that of a Southern German—is the *Annunciation* in the Dominican monastery of Santa Maria di Castello by the painter Jost Amman of Ravensburg (fig. 19).⁸⁷ Signed and dated to the year 1451, the mural, executed partly in oil, is located in a loggia (fig. 20) where it forms part of a pictorial program illustrating the incarnation of Christ. The threshold to the pictorial space is marked by a fictive meticulously sculpted ogival architecture that is meant to create the illusion of an exterior façade. The painted frame opens onto an inner room filled with domestic objects, which in turn affords a view of a hilly landscape and, further in the distance, an open sea with ships.

The mighty angel and the architectural motif find parallels in the *Annunciation* (1443–5) in the cathedral of Aix-en-Provence attributed to Barthélemy d'Eyck, later court painter to René of Anjou (1409–80); its pronounced shadows evoke Konrad Witz (German-Swiss, active 1435–45); and the clear bright light and objects laid out in the manner of a still life are reminiscent of early Netherlandish painters. Probably Amman came into direct contact with early Netherlandish painting, and it is possible that he saw an *Annunciation* by Jan van Eyck in Genoa. But he is documented only in Genoa—where he also was involved in commercial activity and the loaning of money—and Ravensburg, so the question remains whether his broad knowledge of different pictorial traditions justifies calling him an itinerant artist. For our purposes, Amman's deviations from transalpine prototypes are noteworthy. He adopted, for example, the local black and white striation and alluded to the seaside position of the painting in Genoa by introducing a prospect of the sea, which is rather unusual for an *Annunciation*. Most remarkably, the depicted floor exhibits a blue-white spiral band, suggesting floor tiles that do not appear with this sort of decoration in Netherlandish painting, but existed as real objects in the environment of the painting. The ceramic tiles evoked in the painting were specifically found in Santa Maria di Castello (dated about 1400, fig. 18) among the luxury commodities that were imported initially from Al-Andalus, and later from Valencia.⁸⁸ Amman thus not only localized the event precisely but also

86 Cavelli Traverso, "Viaggi," 21; Petti Balbi, "Rapporti," 18.

87 Algeri, "Testimonianze," 44–5; Parma, "Genua," 98; Cavelli Traverso, *Primitivi fiamminghi*, 105–8 (Rotondi Terminiello); Romano, "Giusto di Ravensburg"; Meißner and Kasten, "Amman, Jost."

88 Pessa and Ramagli, *Azulejos e laggioni*, 71–3, 120. Tiles of this type are still *in situ* in the Cartuja de Vall de Cristo near Valencia (founded 1385).

reflected the painting's transcultural context as an artifact. In this form, the *Annunciation* is only conceivable in Genoa. Amman was commissioned for the painting by wool merchants who had made their fortune in Bruges and demonstrated their social rise in the *albergo* Grimaldi by making sure that its coat of arms was included in the painting—as well as by employing a painter who was visibly familiar with the Netherlandish idiom. If from the very beginning, the patrons planned to donate a rather large wall painting instead of (for example) a transportable but simultaneously much more expensive altarpiece, then they had to employ a mobile artist. Only his presence on the spot made possible the references to this place.

It is well known that the earliest reactions of art theorists to the works of early Netherlandish painters stem from Italy. The *ekphrases* written by Cyriacus of Ancona (around 1450) and by the aforementioned Bartolomeo Fazio attest to the appreciation shown especially towards Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden. Fazio praises the former's paintings for their mimetic qualities in their depiction of the visible world (including ingenious mirror effects), the perspective conferred on objects and landscapes, and for their lighting effects.⁸⁹ These artistic qualities essentially determined the perception of the visible in the *Annunciation*, and were decisive for conveying to the viewer a convincing reference to the place and thus to the patrons. With the importation of works by artists such as van Eyck, van der Weyden, Petrus Christus, Gerard David, Jan Provoost, Adriaen Isenbrant, and Joos van Cleve, a remarkably wide cross-section of Netherlandish painting was present in Genoa and Liguria.⁹⁰ Their example remained one of the most important points of reference for painters in Genoa until well into the sixteenth century.

This essay has only been able to address a small selection of works, artists, and processes. The selection is representative inasmuch as the (art)works of foreign origin that can be found in Genoa are actually more numerous than those produced by Genoese artists. But it is important to recognize that the (artistic) orientations discussed above reflect possible options, as other orientations can also be reconstructed. I have attempted to outline this phenomenon in its geographical and historical contexts, namely by considering factors such as location, political and economic developments, and—not least—perception by a heterogeneous public.

89 Christiansen, "View," 39–40.

90 Parma, "Genua," 100–03.

The question as to why local production was unable to satisfy the demand for art has caused Di Fabio to hypothesize that late medieval Genoa's combination of enormous economic strength with political and institutional weakness could only give the market an exceptional role: "Genoa was an effective *relais* for art because it was a great marketplace." He then concludes:

... that its mercantile dimension, first, and its financial dimension, second, informed not only the city's manner of economic existence, but also the mentalities of its governing classes and their rapport with art, which one may characterize as an act of collection (or, alternatively, "accumulation") and exchange ("reinvestment") rather than one of production.⁹¹

Di Fabio's explanation, which considers the phenomenon's *longue durée* against its economic and sociohistorical background, has the advantage of being able to shed particular light on one aspect of the process, namely that of purchasing incentive and commissioning. Further studies on local workshops and their organization, the artists' living and working conditions, guild requirements, the price of materials, and so forth could further illuminate another aspect, namely the conditions of production and the artisans' own perspectives. To do justice to Genoa's role in the realm of artistic transfer and interchange would require a discussion of the conceptual models that describe Genoa as a "*centro-relais* where diverse experiences are collected, and from which they are transmitted and amplified"⁹² or as a "border center."⁹³ However, I would like to conclude this essay by returning to Claussen's concept of "transperiphery", with which this author, while addressing the Genoese reception of Gothic style, reshaped an earlier model of center and periphery that was in many ways reductionistic. This concept "does not define itself in relation to growing geographical distance but in relation to the growing orientation to other superordinate paradigms or traditions ... When an idea is carried into such regions from another center, it triggers a discourse that can prove ... highly

91 "Genova fu un efficace relais artistico perché era un gran mercato ... che la dimensione mercantile, prima, e quella finanziaria, poi, informino non solo il modo di essere economico della città, ma, oltre che la mentalità delle classi di governo, anche il loro rapporto con l'arte, che si caratterizza piuttosto come un fatto di raccolta (vien fatto di dire 'di accumulazione') e di scambio (ma si potrebbe dire 'di reinvestimento') che di produzione"; Di Fabio, "Genova, un capitolo," 12–13.

92 "... Centro-relais dove si raccolgono e da cui vengono trasmesse e amplificate esperienze diverse"; Castelnovo and Ginzburg, "Centro," 344.

93 "Centro di confine": Di Fabio, "Geografia," 95.

productive.”⁹⁴ In my opinion, the notion that artists from one center “are influenced by the different conditions of the trans-periphery the moment they work under them” is just as applicable to Genoa as the idea of trans-periphery as a “spaces of resistance and reflection.” Seen from this perspective, Genoese art is one of discourse and reflective processes.

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94 Claussen, “Zentrum,” 670 and 677.

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Intellectual Life

Giovanna Petti Balbi

The notion of “intellectual life” has a broad range of potential meanings, the result of long-term processes of cultural evolution and development. This concept is generally associated with the transmission of knowledge or interests of a spiritual nature through traditional written forms, with little attention to the more empirical and technical advancements in which man manifests his creativity and genius: it is, in essence, the opposition between the “liberal” and “mechanical” arts. The Genoese case shows how a cultural milieu shaped and consolidated over time resists change, remaining anchored to its roots and traditions while reluctant to accept innovation.

The documentary sources produced in the city during the Middle Ages that might be used for the study of this topic are neither abundant nor helpful, because it is extremely hard to find written references or material remains “from above” regarding artistic or cultural events. We should, however, mention an extraordinarily continuous series of public documents and account books—*libri iurium*, *libri privilegiorum*,¹ notarial registers, and annals—produced within the lay milieu of the chancery established by the commune in 1122, and all intended to preserve its “memory.”² To these may be added the names of the few clerics who appear in the scant extant ecclesiastical documentation, such as Sallustio *scientifico*, attested at the beginning of the twelfth century, and Alessandro *economo*, who compiled the register of the Genoese archbishop’s *curia* in 1143.³ Unfortunately, sources such as letters, personal diaries, and travel accounts that reveal merchants’ backgrounds and intellectual environments—which are typical of the later medieval period and abundant in the Florentine and Venetian milieux—are absent or extremely rare in the case of Genoa. We may nonetheless resort to other sources attesting a more “pragmatic” type of culture, such as models of knowledge and sets of (sometimes experimental) technical skills, especially those related to cartography,

1 The *libri iurium* and *libri privilegiorum* are registers which record the rights held by the commune and the episcopal curia respectively.

2 Discussed in detail in chap. 1.

3 *GMCI*, 120–1. The register is discussed in chap. 1, pp. 31–2.

navigation, and commerce; these are the so-called “mechanical arts,” which during the Middle Ages were considered antithetical to the liberal arts.

The previous scholarship has focused on the diffusion of commercial techniques and the mercantile and financial exchanges fostered by the Genoese in the Mediterranean. Yet scholars have paid much less attention to cultural mediation and cross-cultural relationships: contacts and influences with different individuals and cultures that were not limited to commerce or to strictly economic topics; the widespread presence of the Genoese in the Mediterranean; and their stays in the eastern colonies where they could develop cultural relationships—not least after the translation of classical Greek authors into Latin, which were then exported to the west. Their relationship with the world at large, its influence and allure, were fundamental for the development of Genoese intellectual life. This relationship fostered changes in taste, the expansion of authors commonly read, and above all, a cosmopolitanism that encouraged the development of an original culture that cannot always be understood or evaluated using traditional criteria.⁴

Before delving into the forms of writing and other indicators which illustrate the manifestations of intellectual life, a brief review of the urban environment, its citizens’ pragmatic mentality, and their collective attitude toward the humanities and sciences may be useful. It may be unnecessary to remind readers that Genoa—an important port and commercial emporium at the center of vast mercantile and exchange networks spanning from the Mediterranean to continental Europe to the Atlantic—was one of the major maritime and economic powers of the medieval West. Furthermore, it was characterized by the individualism of its inhabitants, endemic factional struggles between its main urban families, an unstable political framework, and the precariousness of its institutions. Thus the city developed patterns of life, layers of culture, technical solutions, and political experiments that suited its connection to the sea and the mercantile vocation of its inhabitants, favoring the birth of the *Ianuensis ergo mercator* (“Genoese, therefore a merchant”) stereotype, as well as particular forms of scholastic learning and the diffusion of notarial practices: the medieval city was shaped and influenced by these elements upon which civic identity was constructed among the practical realities of social life.

4 *Échanges culturels*; Petti Balbi, “Circolazione di uomini.”

A Culture *ad necessitatem* ("Limited to the Necessary")

As in all communal societies, a system of education developed in Genoa that began with primary instruction or *gramatica*, which was taught at no charge by clerics, and involved the teaching of reading, writing and counting on one's fingers. But already by the end of the twelfth century another form of education had developed, which was not strictly grammatical but more practical for a society mainly devoted to commerce. This was a technical and professional type of instruction—based on calculation, a basic knowledge of arithmetic and bookkeeping, and the fundamentals of law—which would permit boys to enter the economic world as merchants capable of writing and understanding business letters and keeping their books in order, or of finding work as scribes in commercial banks or the public administration.⁵

This type of education was fairly expensive because it was imparted by paid lay masters and notaries; nonetheless, it was successful and came to be referred to using an expression that reveals its peculiarities and objectives: *gramatica ad usum* or *ad officium mercatorum Ianuensium* ("grammar for the use or purpose of Genoese merchants") or *secundum mercatores Ianue* ("according to the merchants of Genoa"). This definition appropriately captures the local mentality, which considered education useful only for producing profit for merchants (i.e., the Genoese), and not as a fulfillment of spiritual and cultural interests. This frame of mind, this practical and concrete type of knowledge, were attested in 1432 by such a sharp and perceptive observer as Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (the future Pope Pius II), who described the Genoese thus: "little lovers of knowledge, they study grammar only insofar as it is necessary, and scorn other types of studies; but whenever they smell business, they step forward."⁶

The long-lasting indifference of the Genoese towards cultural activities and intellectual leisure did not imply the absence in Genoa of notaries, teachers, and legal experts, who played important roles in urban life; or prevent the circulation of various kinds of manuscripts, which were recopied and exchanged between devotees of literature or the sciences, or more frequently sold or traded for profit. In both lay and ecclesiastical milieux, manuscripts had a practical function: for religious purposes or prayer, or for professional needs (especially the legal professions). Classical *auctores* and more recent works, which attest to individual interests and are not related to the urban environment, appear only rarely. During the Middle Ages, the chancery of the republic (beginning with

5 Petti Balbi, "Scuola medievale," especially the bibliography.

6 *GM*, 123–9.

Caffaro) and the archbishop's curia (beginning with the renowned Giacomo di Cogorno, archbishop of Genoa 1239–52), were meeting-places and cultural laboratories for intellectuals. This was partly because—unlike other important Italian cities—Genoa did not have a *studium*, or university, until 1471, when one was established by order of Pope Sixtus IV, the Savonese Francesco della Rovere. This further demonstrates the local disregard for higher education that forced medieval Genoese and Ligurians to study for their degrees in Bologna or Pavia.

Caffaro di Caschifellone (1080/81–1166?) was the first Genoese political and literary figure to frame political and ethical justifications for the activities of his fellow citizens and their innate vocation for commerce and exchange; through his writings, he legitimized the triumph of the mercantile civilization of which he himself was a distinguished representative.⁷ Caffaro was born around 1080 into a family of vicecomital origin, and served eight times as consul or consul of the pleas. As such he reflected the new Genoese aristocracy, an elite composed of families of different social backgrounds, which in 1099 gave birth to the commune (*compagna*) and participated in its earliest religious, political, and commercial endeavors.⁸ Although he was the first author of the well-known *Annales Ianuenses* or city annals (which with various interruptions were continued up to 1293 with Jacopo Doria's final entries), Caffaro was a man of action, not a man of letters. The first historical work written by a Genoese layman, the annals serve as the collective memory of the city, a self-conscious expression of the attitudes and activities of the community. This was especially true once the annals became official in 1152 with consular support. Government recognition made the annals the approved medium through which the memory of Genoese ventures would be transmitted, with the aims of teaching future generations and educating good citizens—above all, men of the governing elite.⁹

Structured according to the chronological succession of officials and notable for its particular ideological character, the annals embody a program of socio-political instruction and an example of civil pragmatism. They express the integration of society, power, and culture—a tenacious cohesion that lasted through almost the entire thirteenth century despite bitter social tensions and ongoing conflicts with rival maritime powers. This is demonstrated by

7 On Caffaro and the civic annals see also chap. 1, pp. 37–9, and chap. 8, pp. 200–01.

8 Caffaro is the subject of numerous studies listed in Petti Balbi, "Cultura storica," 148–55; among the most recent is Schweppenstette, *Politik der Erinnerung*. On the Genoese elites in the years before the *compagna*, cf. chaps. 4, pp. 95–9, and 7, pp. 168–70.

9 AGC; on the ideological and didactic aims of the annals see chap. 4, p. 105.

the epic poem written by the notary Ursone on the struggle between the city and Frederick II, or Lanfranco Cigala's songs of the crusades and the poems of other Genoese troubadours influenced by Provençal culture.¹⁰

Most medieval civic chroniclers attempted to write history without any gaps, to connect past and present to an absolute or relative origin, going back almost to the beginning of time via a founding hero or god. Caffaro, by contrast, began his narrative in the present with events he witnessed with his own eyes—without any connections or references to the past, and without an eschatological perspective, because he did not deem it necessary to record a past which was inadequate for the present and irrelevant to the aims of his work. For him, Genoa was born in “historical time” at the end of the eleventh century, with the establishment of the commune and Genoese participation in the First Crusade in 1099, events which were mutual causes and effects of each other. By bringing together and reading these events in an original form, transposing history into myth, Caffaro created Genoa's “myth of origins” or “Caffaro's myth”: a history of the city that looked no further back than the decisive year 1099, and one that looked towards the future rather than the past, in line with the “linear and real time” of the merchant (namely, the Genoese). The connection Caffaro established between the commune and participation in the crusade and his justification of the expeditions in the East as service to God were clever ideological maneuvers aimed at placing Genoa and its inhabitants within a “Christian militia”; further, they conferred a sort of legal validity upon the nascent commune and its Mediterranean expansion. Caffaro's history thus became the official memory of the city up to 1163, when the chronicler ceased work, weakened by his years and perhaps embittered by the outbreak of internal conflicts and the erosion of social harmony. (Already in 1153 he was being assisted in writing the annals by the notary Macobrius.)

Caffaro was not an intellectual in the traditional sense: although based on sacred scripture, the psalter, and notarial formularies, his perspective was above all the result of a rich experience of life, matured in diverse environments and through his encounters with prominent figures from the emperor to the pope. It was further based on the rigorous moral principles of a God-fearing layman, not subject to imaginative or speculative flights of fancy. Caffaro placed this perspective at the service of the community to convey ethical values and exemplary models of behavior, but his sense of purpose sometimes led him to omit political and commercial events in which Genoa was certainly involved. A few omissions can be explained by the fact that Caffaro elaborated on a number of particular events in other short thematic works

10 Croce, “Letteratura,” 13.

that overlapped the annals: the *Liberation of the Cities in the East*, the *History of the Conquest of Almería and Tortosa*, and the *Brief History of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (this last a composite work, of which only the first part can be attributed to Caffaro). Caffaro understood and revealed the institutional, economic, and socio-cultural features typical of his city and reflected the pragmatic mentality of his time, thus confirming his exceptional nature as a man of politics and action who was nonetheless aware of the effectiveness of propaganda and the written word as weapons.

Continuity and Innovation

In the earlier thirteenth century, Genoa moved to a podestarial political system—that is, a government headed by an itinerant foreign *podestà* or executive magistrate, almost always a judge or man of law accompanied by a staff of legal professionals. In parallel, the city underwent institutional reform, with increased attention to law, legal practice, and rhetoric. Under the auspices of Jacopo Baldovini (Balduino), *podestà* in 1229, the official annals (which had been interrupted) began to be written again; the documents confirming the city's privileges began to be collected in the *Libri iurium*; and the civic statutes were reorganized. These were all undertakings of great political and cultural complexity that required increasing numbers of legal experts.¹¹ Therefore in 1243 the well-known Albertano da Brescia, a judge in the *podestà*'s entourage, gave before the local judges and advocates (whom he defined as *sapientissimi*, “most learned,” and who in a certain sense constituted the intelligentsia) an erudite sermon whose practical and moral content concerned the concept of just profit. This was a theme which touched the conscience and practices of the Genoese: while they were skilled at extracting illicit profits, they were nonetheless sensitive to moral sanction and excommunication.¹²

In this climate, Genoa's commercial and political relations with Provence and the bilingual experience favored the flourishing of courtly poetry in Provençal as well as Genoese. In 1190, for example, Raimbaut de Vaquero composed a sort of dialogue (based on a famous dispute) between a jester expressing himself in the *langue d'oc* and a Genoese woman using the vernacular. Other poets such as Percivalle Doria, Lanfranco Cigala, and Giacomo Grillo were not professional scholars but politicians, members of important families who engaged with the traditional themes of chivalric literature and

11 RSL; Artifoni, “Équipes des podestats.” Cf. the discussion of Baldovini in chap. 6, p. 149.

12 Ibid.

wrote literary works with political relevance. These works balanced literary refinement with constant attention to contemporary civic problems and an awareness of the precariousness of both power and life itself. Their works in both verse and prose, which taught the Genoese about the refined customs, attitudes, and courtly life of the troubadour courts, enjoyed great popularity. Courtly literature and epic poetry thus started to circulate alongside the major legal texts.¹³ Contemporary changes in taste and technical innovations were introduced by the so-called *techniciens fantôme* ("ghost artisans"), itinerant artists and engineers who came from various regions to assist in the building of the communal palace and the cathedral, both monuments which illustrate the eclecticism of Genoese culture.¹⁴

From the mid-thirteenth century, the close connections between the Roman curia and the Genoese who followed the prelates of the powerful Fieschi family to Rome developed and strengthened interest in the sciences, as the botanical, medical, and scientific treatises by Ruffino, Simone Cordo da Genova, and Galvano da Levanto attest. These works were well-suited to the practical culture of the Genoese, who took a particular interest in astronomy, geography, and cartography.¹⁵ Religious institutions also played an important role in this cultural renewal: the mendicant foundations especially were important centers for the preservation, circulation, and lending of manuscripts, and for the production of moral literary works, amongst which we should mention those penned by Genoese archbishop Jacopo da Varagine and the vernacular poet of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries known as the Anonymous Genoese (*Anonimo genovese*).

The Anonymous poet deserves to be discussed briefly: an otherwise unidentified Luchetto, well-acquainted with the mendicant orders and author of 182 poems in the vernacular on a range of themes. The poet felt called to write, and assigned an almost ideological sense of purpose to the vernacular.¹⁶ With acute realism, he revealed to an admiring public his thoughts and moral advice on Genoa's maritime activities, the tragedy of its internal conflicts, the city's beauty and glory, the degeneration of its morals, and the dangerous appeal of wealth—at times using the same hagiographical narratives used by Jacopo da Varagine. He was not an intellectual in the usual sense; rather, his verses illustrate the more mature expression of an old didactic tradition. Additionally,

13 Croce, "Letteratura," 8–12; Petti Balbi, "Circolazione di uomini," 14–20.

14 See discussion in chap. 10, pp. 293–5.

15 Petti Balbi, "Scuola medievale," 20–22; Di Fabio, "Segni di egemonia."

16 Anonimo genovese, *Poesie and Poesie storiche*.

he applied the culture of the mendicant orders to everyday life, adapting even its language to the wide public audience for whom his work was intended. Between the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, a process that reworked Genoese models and cultural elements developed within the Genoese religious milieu, particularly in devotional literature, both prose and verse. These were not received passively, but adapted in form and content to suit the city's political and economic realities and the needs of an essentially mercantile society. Luchetto's poetry remains the most important vernacular work by a layman (as he seems to have been) aimed at a particular audience, because the intellectual elites—jurists and members of eminent families—remained faithful to the language and traditions of the Latin classics.

Jacopo da Varagine (1228–29?–1298) was a true intellectual at the apex of the moral and cultural renewal fostered by the mendicant orders.¹⁷ Born in Varazze on the Ligurian Riviera, he is also known as *Jacobus de Voragine* (from Latin *vorago*, chasm) because of the depth of his knowledge. A well-known preacher with numerous interests, he channeled his vast literary and biblical knowledge into his impressive hagiographical collection, the *Legenda aurea* or *Golden Legend* (literally “book of gold”). Written for preachers, the book was a medieval bestseller: it not only became Europe's most printed book after the Bible, but was also rapidly translated into various languages. It is a collection of saints' lives, a vast repertoire of traditional didactic stories containing fantasy elements, written with a precise ideological purpose devoid of any historiographical intent, being meant for wide use by the clergy and the faithful.¹⁸

In accord with the culture and mission of a preacher, Jacopo da Varagine composed this work in the different convents in which he lived: thus it was not a product of, nor does it reflect, the Genoese cultural climate as does his last work, the *Chronica civitatis Ianuensis ab origine usque ad annum MCCXCVII* (*Chronicle of the City of Genoa from its Origin to the Year 1297*), in which the archbishop moves easily between hagiography and history.¹⁹ In 1292, towards the end of his life and while prior of the Dominican province of Lombardy, he was appointed archbishop of Genoa on the principle that, as someone detached from the urban environment, he would be able to reconcile the internal conflicts which afflicted the city on both political and ecclesiastical levels. As Jacopo had been thrust onto the Genoese scene as head of the local church,

17 On Jacopo and his work see also chap. 1, pp. 36–7, and chap. 8, pp. 198–9.

18 Bertini Guidetti, *Paradiso e terra*.

19 JVC; an English translation of Jacopo's *History* by C.E. Beneš is forthcoming from Manchester University Press.

the educational aims underlying his work were different from those evident in Caffaro's annals. Jacopo's chronicle, which was written between 1296 and his death in 1298, is subdivided into twelve parts and modeled on works by Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, whom the author regarded as *auctoritates*, or models. Jacopo's chronicle treats a variety of themes, employing different styles of rhetoric from various literary genres: he considers the nature and types of secular government before delving into the religious and secular history of Genoa from the beginning of time up to his own day. He used a wide range of sources: biblical and hagiographical material, legends, classical and medieval authors, collections and lists of *exempla* (which were very familiar to him), together with annals and official Genoese documents. Much like the tiles of a mosaic, this material was integrated despite its heterogeneity into a compact and unified work, in which Jacopo revealed his great skill as a narrator through very effective word choices, within a typically medieval theocratic vision which attributed to God a providential role in history and connected everything back to Him.

The chronicle, which according to some was written in competition with Jacopo Doria's official annals of the same period, has been defined as a manual of political and communal theology,²⁰ because it outlined a model of a peaceful and God-fearing society tied to God's church and to the reassuring figure of the archbishop who sought to establish himself as a man of peace, a mediator between heaven and earth. The cathedral physically became the place where the city's memory and identity were preserved. It was in the cathedral that the ashes of Saint John the Baptist were preserved and venerated, along with the *Sacro Catino* or Holy Grail (fig. 46) and the cross of the Zaccaria—all relics or reliquaries brought from the East, which even Caffaro had deliberately ignored.²¹ Here, a few years after the archbishop's death, the pagan Janus, founder of the city, was welcomed and "baptized" by portrayal on a column in the nave (fig. 33): this was suggested by da Varagine's imaginative mythopoesis which the author developed in competition with Caffaro.²² Jacopo transposed the city's origins and history into myth: he attributed Genoa's foundation to Janus, king of Italy, venerated by the Romans and depicted as the god of the threshold or door. This choice enabled him to incorporate a symbolic interpretation of the toponym *ianua* (door) with another supposed etymology of *genua* (knees—alluding to the pity and mercy of the Genoese, always ready to serve

20 Chap. 1, p. 36; also, Petti Balbi, "Cultura storica," 164.

21 Cf. discussions in chaps. 8, pp. 204–9; chap. 9, pp. 226 and 229–30; and chap. 12, pp. 348–51.

22 Cf. discussion in chap. 8, pp. 198–9.

the Church).²³ In light of this globalizing myth, therefore, Genoa could claim titles of antiquity, nobility, and service to Christianity that equaled or even surpassed those claimed by more prominent cities such as Rome, Constantinople, and Ravenna.

In his chronicle, Jacopo da Varagine demonstrates his vast scholarship, creative imagination, and above all his ability to integrate different sources to convey educational messages. He was not a mere compiler but an intellectual who reflected on both past and present, producing a structurally and stylistically well-crafted and original history in which realism and allegory coexist. With its polysemous repertoire of mythical, religious, and historical motifs, the chronicle was well-liked and enjoyed widespread approval, as its numerous manuscripts attest. The chronicle became a mirror reflecting the contemporary present and established the myth of Janus in Genoese civic identity, despite quick criticism by humanistic philologists, especially Giorgio Stella.

The Influence of Humanism: Between Culture and Politics

Due to Genoa's regular political and commercial contact with Tuscany in the fourteenth century, and following stays in Liguria by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, Genoa's more typically mercantile society started to appreciate these authors' works; consequently, they enjoyed a rapid dissemination. Dante's *Divina Commedia* (*Divine Comedy*) enjoyed particular fortune: what is considered to be the oldest copy of the text was copied in Genoa in 1336 for the *podestà* in office at the time. A few years later another copy was in the possession of a member of the powerful Spinola family, and during the second half of the fourteenth century other Genoese citizens owned texts by Dante—for example Bartolomeo de Jacopo, who owned copies of the *Divina Commedia* and the *De monarchia* (*On Monarchy*).

The relationships which individual Genoese had with Petrarch and his presence at the Avignon curia especially encouraged the spread of humanism which, through a rediscovery of the philologically-correct versions of the Latin and Greek classics, proposed a new vision of life, affirmed the centrality of humanity as a measure of all things, and called for the secularization of life with a new awareness of the political and social nature of the written word. Among these pioneering humanists, two figures stand out: Guido Sette, archbishop of Genoa 1358–1367 and a friend and correspondent of Petrarch, and Bartolomeo de Jacopo, a doctor of laws who corresponded with Petrarch and

23 Petti Balbi, "Genova."

Coluccio Salutati. Towards the end of the fourteenth century, over the course of a distinguished career in the chancery and as a diplomat at the service of Genoa, the papacy, and the Visconti, Bartolomeo assembled a rich library containing about a hundred books on literary, historical, philosophical, theological, and legal topics.²⁴

These were individual intellectuals who were aware of their cultural and political roles, moved in an environment receptive to external influences, and established close relationships with the powerful. Towards the end of the century, however, despite an extremely troubled socio-political climate, the arts and letters began to receive increased attention from the dogal administration via various forms of patronage. More specifically, it seems that a sort of cultural circle developed around the figure of Raffaele Adorno (brother of Doge Antoniotto Adorno), whose inventory dated 1396 lists forty-four texts which included classical works, works of history and moral philosophy, Petrarch's *Epistole* (*Letters*), and Boccaccio's *Genealogia deorum gentilium* (*Genealogy of the Pagan Gods*). Some of these were illuminated manuscripts, evidence of the tastes and cultural innovations of the small number of people who used this precious book collection, which is still the richest assemblage of non-professional books in Genoa. Among those who had access to it were probably the Stella brothers: Giorgio the chronicler and Giovanni the chronicler and chancellor.

In this milieu, the "structural" connection between men of culture and the political elite evolved and strengthened: exemplary models and behaviors were once again drawn from mythology and the classical world, while intellectuals were aware of the present and attentive to the celebration of power, pursuing the approval and protection of the two most powerful families of the moment, the Adorno and Campofregoso. Giovanni Stella was among those intellectuals who sought to flatter the powerful: as soon as he entered the chancery as a *scriptor* (scribe) he wrote a brief and modest poem celebrating the 1392 peace between Florence and Milan mediated by Doge Antoniotto Adorno. Stella sent his work to be judged by Coluccio Salutati; having gained the favor of the Florentine chancellor and the doge, he was appointed chancellor of the Republic three years later, a post he held at least until 1435.

Similarly, Alberto Alfieri was a teacher from Vercelli and follower of Jacopo Adorno, the Genoese consul in Caffa (in the Crimea), where between 1418 and 1420 he wrote the *Odgoas*, a sort of dialogue named after its eight-day division in compliance with the structure of Plato's dialogues. The *Odgoas* is an encomiastic work written for the Adorno, and in particular for Doge Antoniotto, the most prominent member of the family, well-known for his expansive

24 Petti Balbi, "Cultura e potere."

Mediterranean policy: inspired by the doge's difficulties with longstanding struggles for power, Alfieri posited an alliance between Genoa and the Visconti. His historical and moral reflections on what constitutes honest political activity, on justice, and on the inevitability of divine punishment for poor rulers are particularly interesting, with explicit references to the theories expressed by Plato in the *Republic* and Cicero in the *Somnium Scipionis* (*Dream of Scipio*).²⁵ Alfieri's work demonstrates the constant popularity of such encomiastic literature and the broadening of Genoese cultural horizons due to contact with the rest of the world, particularly the Greek culture that was widespread in the colonies.

Giorgio Stella (1370?–1420), the most important Genoese intellectual between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, remained on the edge of this circle of patronage. Although not provided with a specific mandate, he re-established the urban annalistic tradition begun by Caffaro and filled the century-old gap in the annals, which had ceased to be written following Jacopo Doria's last entries in 1293.²⁶ For his own pleasure, out of love for history and for his city, Giorgio wrote an imposing work in three books on Genoa's history from its origins to 1405.²⁷ In that year, Marshal Jean Le Meingre (also known as Boucicaut), the French governor of the city, along with archbishop Pileo de Marini, asked for a copy of Stella's *Annals*. Thus the work acquired official approval after the fact, much like in Caffaro's case. The governor's request has led some scholars to define Giorgio as an "intellectual of the regime", especially because the annalist expressed a positive opinion of French rule in the city and held that Boucicaut's initial policies intended to restore order and legality in a city fraught with conflicts and factional struggles. In fact, this opinion was widespread in the community, which favored a strong government capable of ending internal strife and restoring social harmony.²⁸ However, the doges and governors that ruled the city after the end of French domination probably considered Giorgio Stella to have been excessively tied to that regime, and it was probably this fact, and not health issues or personal reasons (writing in the prologue to the *Annals* in 1405, he declared that he wanted to write a collection of biographies), that led to his disengagement from writing the annals, which were thereafter entrusted to his brother Giovanni, who was more influential than Giorgio and abler at maneuvering in the halls of power.

25 Ponte, "Grammatico."

26 Also discussed in chap. 1, p. 38.

27 AG. In the prologue to book 2, Giorgio Stella presents a cogent justification of his chosen division (69).

28 Petti Balbi, "Cultura storica," 167–70.

Giorgio, the eldest son of a Genoese chancellor who served under Simone Boccanegra, was a notary who worked as a *scriptor* in various communal offices. He was neither a politician nor a chancellor like his brother Giovanni, being instead more involved behind the scenes. Giorgio was cultured and thoughtful, a humble and curious man of letters, a scholar who was interested in new ideas, and a lover of history; he was not only well-versed in local chronicles and documents as well as the classics, but also knew and used recent authors, and corresponded with Coluccio Salutati, the humanist chancellor of the Republic of Florence, to whom he turned for bibliographical suggestions and new ideas. His family's position and his experience in public office gave him access to firsthand sources, which he sometimes integrated with eyewitness accounts (always critically evaluated), and often enriched with a vast amount of information even regarding events which only tangentially involved Genoa.

Although he deliberately positions his work as part of the annalistic tradition, Giorgio Stella offers a new model of historical writing more aligned with the principles of humanistic historiography: he eliminated legends and miraculous events from his annals and based his writing on concrete sources according to the rigorous method suggested by Salutati, whom Stella greatly admired. Nonetheless, this did not prevent him from proposing an astrological myth to justify the turbulent history of Genoa, which he says was founded under the sign of Scorpio, which is dominated by the war-god Mars.²⁹ Still, this use of symbolism and the idea of astrological influence are typical of humanism. More realistically, Stella often expressed his conviction that moral laxity, lack of decorum, the absence of peace and justice, and greed were the true causes of the city's problems. This led him to shy away from a triumphalist tone, to lament the virtue of the past, and to insist upon the vanity of earthly things, sometimes with expressions of melancholy—despite his optimistic view of history, which he considered a *magistra vitae* (guide to life). Stella's is a moralistic reading of events which nonetheless avoids the determinism typical of the medieval worldview.

His staunch adhesion to humanism and his love for the classics are evident in the title of his work: *Annales*, an homage to continuity with the past, and *Genuenses*, i.e. the classical version of the toponym, not the vernacular version *Ianuenses* used by Caffaro.³⁰ Stella's annals were already considered the most reliable and complete source for recent Genoese history by Jacopo Bracelli; when Biondo Flavio asked him in 1454 for a history of Genoa that Biondo could consult for his *Italia illustrata* (*Italy Illuminated*), Bracelli recommended

29 AG, 218.

30 See the discussion of this debate in chap. 8, pp. 209–10.

Stella's work, borrowed the manuscript from the communal archive where the *Annales* were jealously preserved, and sent Biondo a copy which he had transcribed in three months. Nor was this the only instance in which the value of Giorgio Stella's annals was recognized: Agostino Giustiniani effectively looted Stella's annals when writing his own history at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The result was almost a translation of Stella's work into the vernacular, but perhaps because it was written in the vernacular it was widely disseminated, thereby conferring upon Giustiniani undeserved fame.³¹

Giorgio Stella's annals were continued, albeit with a different kind of effectiveness, by family members: up to 1435 by his brother Giovanni, who had demonstrated literary aspirations on various occasions but lacked his brother's competence and dedication, and was driven by strong personal ambition. He was succeeded up to 1461 by Giorgio's son Battista. The sections written by Battista and the other annalists that followed him, however, were lost almost immediately after compilation; the chancellor Bartolomeo Senarega complained about this in 1492, when the Milanese governor appointed him official annalist with the additional task of giving a more elegant shape to his predecessors' work.

A City Without a Court: Patronage and Collecting

Between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, frequent political and institutional upheavals combined with the interventions of foreign rulers led to constitutional revisions and the production of new legal codes in rapid succession (1400, 1413, and 1443).³² The revised civil and criminal statutes incorporated earlier local juridical traditions and offered a "culture of law" with a more contemporary perspective. The best-known figure here is Bartolomeo Bosco, whose education at the university in Pavia and professional reputation secured him a respectable career and gave him significant influence over the shaping of Genoese institutions. Bartolomeo is known not only for his *Consilia*, but also because in 1420 he managed to transmute his legal training and life experience—characterized by a sincere and tender religious devotion—into a tangible endeavor. This was the hospital of Pammatone, Genoa's first lay institution charged with care of the sick, which was later supported by men of

31 CARG; Petti Balbi, "Cultura storica," 184–6.

32 See chap. 6, pp. 151–2.

law and culture who reconciled science and religion, patronage and Christian charity.³³

Tomaso Campofregoso, who became first doge for 1415–21, then lord of Sarzana and later doge again from 1436 to 1443, grew up in this vibrant cultural climate. Aspiring to become the lord of Genoa, Tomaso became a great patron of the arts, creating around him the kind of court which had never before existed in the city. Other members of his family shared his literary interests and dynastic ambitions, for example his brother Spinetta and his nephews Nicolò and Giano Campofregoso. They and others in his entourage (for example, chancellors Jacopo Bracelli and Gottardo Stella) supported him, along with numerous jurists, teachers, men of letters, and itinerant humanists—scholars who sought support from the powerful in exchange for works celebrating the princely patron.³⁴

The doge loved reading, and conversed with the ancients; he also corresponded with the most important chancellors and literary men of his time: Giovanni Aurispa, Francesco Barbaro, Poggio Bracciolini, and Giannozzo Manetti. A keen bibliophile, he assembled a rich library—which in 1425 was located in his *pulcherrimo studiolo* (“very beautiful study”) in Sarzana—whose texts included books from Petrarch’s library, which had been dispersed after his death. The collection is noteworthy for its lack of theological and juridical texts, but also its inclusion of recent classics, especially works of history, Aristotle, the Koran, a book on chess, Petrarch’s letters, and Genoese chronicles—texts that bear witness to his varied interests and the rediscovery of *otium* (leisure) as a new socio-cultural ideal for the Genoese intellectual elite. As doge, Campofregoso supported and increased the presence of public readers in the city, and seems to have been determined to effect profound changes in education, culture, and welfare via a collaboration with archbishop Pileo de Marini (himself a bibliophile and man of letters). Convinced of the importance of education for the ethical and political training of the governing class, the doge sought to transform his personal interests and experience into a much wider collective experience through an iconographic project: the external walls of the Campofregoso residence in San Tommaso were decorated with frescoes depicting the feats of Tomaso’s father, which exalted the Genoese venture in Cyprus and underscored that Tomaso’s father had been chosen as the progenitor of the Campofregoso lineage. This fresco was characterized by

33 Piergiovanni, *Lezioni di storia giuridica*. See related discussions in chaps. 12, pp. 363–4, and 13, pp. 389–90.

34 Petti Balbi, “Uomo delle istituzioni.”

strong cultural elements intended to create a didactic public image for his family.³⁵

A more general appreciation for literary and artistic matters seems to have spread in the city and reached a larger audience in this period, especially after the commune adopted provisions to attract and recruit teachers and itinerant humanists who were employed as public readers. These readers were engaged to teach Genoa's youth according to traditional criteria, while also holding public lectures and debates on different themes—the liberal arts, philosophy, theology, medicine—whose moral and civic undertones were aimed at shaping good citizens.³⁶ These professionals came from different personal and educational backgrounds. However, Bartolomeo Guasco, Antonio Cassarino, Antonio Astesano, Pietro Pierleoni, Giorgio Valla, and Giovanni Andrea de' Bussi (to mention only a few) must have influenced the educational paths and choices of many scions of Genoa's prestigious families, who were destined to occupy important public posts. Some copied manuscripts in order to please their teachers, while others wrote poetry—for example, Andreolo Giustiniani, author of a brief poem in Dantesque tercets on the 1431 failed Venetian siege of Chios, the mastic-producing island belonging to the Giustiniani.³⁷ Still others merely remembered with gratitude and affection those who had given them an appreciation of literature. The liberal arts, study, and wisdom were considered to play a fundamental role in attaining true nobility, as suggested in *De nobilitate* (*On Nobility*, 1446), written by Leonardo Giustiniani of Chios, a firm believer in the humanistic idea that true nobility was not a hereditary prerogative, but derived from personal virtue.³⁸

Despite persistent political instability and bitter conflict between the Adorno and Campofregoso for control of the *dogato*, a struggle in which even foreign powers intervened,³⁹ the increased attention of Genoa's public institutions to the city's cultural life and official efforts to raise awareness were fruitful: according to Jacopo Bracelli, in the summer of 1446 about five thousand individuals attended the scholarly lectures on various topics held in the city by the young Ferdinando da Cordova, fresh from his success at the university of Paris.⁴⁰ This, however, remained an isolated incident because the ideals of

35 *Carteggio di Pileo de Marini*; Borlandi, "Pittura politica"; Petti Balbi, "Legittimazione."

36 Petti Balbi, "Scuola medievale," 30–43.

37 Giustiniani, *Relazione dell'attacco*.

38 Leonardo da Chio, *De nobilitate*.

39 Petti Balbi, "Tra dogato e principato"; Shaw, "Principles and Practice"; Levy, *Monarchie et commune*.

40 Petti Balbi, *L'epistolario* 23 (15 June 1446), to Andreolo Giustiniani.

civic humanism, particularly its emphasis on the citizen's conscience as driver of political choices, struggled to find acceptance; more popular in Genoa was the idea that the humanities could contribute to a better understanding of religious doctrine and the salvation of humanity.

Jacopo Bracelli (1390–1466?) was fully aware of the social and political importance of the *studia humanitatis* (humanities). An able chancellor who worked for the commune for many years (1409–1466), he is the most eminent representative of Genoese humanism despite his neglect by historians. A true intellectual, he broke with the past and anticipated themes and behaviors typical of the Renaissance.⁴¹ His life and works are concrete examples of the relationships between public life and the life of the mind, the active life and cultural engagement, the chancery and history—two different spheres which according to him could coexist because “in dedicating oneself to business and letters, one should divide one's time so that the two do not hinder one another.”⁴² He repeatedly expressed his conviction that public life could be reconciled with intellectual engagement, citing as evidence the example set by three popes of his acquaintance: Eugenius IV, Nicholas V, and Calixtus III, who despite their numerous commitments “had been seen to read and listen to those who read.”⁴³ His professional training, strong personality, and moral and civic commitment earned him recognition from many, but unlike many of his colleagues, he was one of few chancellor-humanists who did not leave Genoa, despite the attractions of posts and honors repeatedly offered him by popes, kings, and other rulers.

Given the political experience he gained in Genoa and on his many diplomatic missions abroad, as well as his relationships with the most renowned intellectuals of the time—Francesco Barbaro, Poggio Bracciolini, Biondo Flavio, Francesco Filelfo, and Giovanni Andrea de' Bussi—he could certainly have been a competent annalist. Yet epistemological considerations—a different view of the methods, if not of the aim, of history—forced him to break with the previous annalistic tradition, which he considered valid but obsolete.⁴⁴ He acknowledged the annalists' commitment to truth and intellectual honesty but considered them antiquarians, lacking any attention to style or the rhetorical devices that could transform a historical work into a work of art: a penetrating

41 Petti Balbi, “Dall'annalistica alla storiografia.”

42 Petti Balbi, *L'epistolario* 23 (15 June 1446), Bracelli to Andreolo Giustiniani.

43 Petti Balbi, *L'epistolario* 72 (5 November 1457), Bracelli to the young Camillo Giustiniani, to whom he suggests pursuing commerce without abandoning letters.

44 Ibid., letter 61 (3 January 1456), Bracelli to Giovanni Mario Filelfo.

and evocative reconstruction or *opus oratorium* (act of persuasion) according to Cicero's teachings, which he fully embraced.

Jacopo Bracelli was most devoted to political history: analytical and self-aware, with educational aims and social value. But he also wrote brief texts on different subjects that he called *lucubrationes*, or night-thoughts: the *Descriptio orae Ligusticae* (*Description of the Ligurian Coasts*), a geographical and anthropogenic text containing observations on the territory, climate, and economy of the Ligurian Rivas, perhaps influenced by Manuel Chrysoloras's Latin version of Ptolemy's *Geography*; the *Epistola* (*Letter*), a text on urban topography and the social aspects of the city written at the request of French ambassador Arrigo de Merla; the *Libellus de claris genuensibus* (*Little Book of Eminent Genoese* [*Men*]), a collection of profiles and biographies of famous Genoese figures of the past who had distinguished themselves by their valor and virtues, inspired by the work of Valerius Maximus; and other brief works, including some in the vernacular.⁴⁵

His main work is the *De bello Hispaniensi* (*On the Spanish War*) in five books, in which he reconstructs the phases of the long conflict (1420–56) between Genoa and Alfonso V of Aragon with various digressions; this is presented within the broader Italian and Mediterranean contexts which the author knew well, since he helped negotiate truces and peace treaties between the two main contenders and their allies. The preface contains a passionate glorification of history, which he says was granted by God to humanity so that man could enjoy and learn from it, serving both ethical and civic functions. Every work of history, whether ancient or recent, had to be an *opus oratorium*: a stylistically precise process making a persuasive argument, capable of saving the feats of the ancients from obscurity and presenting them as examples to motivate readers. The *De bello Hispaniensi* is dense in both structure and content, and its narrative is not simply congratulatory; rather, it is a careful analysis of the conflict's causes, full of psychological observations regarding the main protagonists and effective depictions of the crowd. The crux of the work is the Battle of Ponza (1435), considered by many the greatest naval venture of the fifteenth century, in which the victorious Genoese gained rich spoils through their capture of King Alfonso and many other nobles.

Above all, the eighty-seven extant letters written between 1432 and 1463 by Bracelli and his correspondents—men of letters, friends, admirers both Genoese and foreign—are imbued with a sense of immediacy that reveals much about Bracelli as a person: his civic commitments, scholarship, and

45 Together with the *De bello Hispaniensi*, some letters, and the *Tavola di Polcevera*, these letters were printed in Paris in 1520 by Agostino Giustiniani, a great admirer of Bracelli.

intellectual versatility. The letters encompass his personal and familial concerns, learned socio-cultural disputes, and meditations on religious and existential problems—for example, on the exchange of letters between Seneca and Saint Paul, or on the prophetic interpretation of Virgil's fourth eclogue (understood in the Middle Ages to foretell the coming of Christ). The letters also underscore Bracelli's role as a mentor for Genoa's youth, the city's future generations of politicians and intellectuals. Even though he had served doges and governors, and particularly admired Tomaso Campofregoso, Bracelli was not among their chorus of opportunistic admirers. Rather, Bracelli was a republican: he defended the values of *libertà* (freedom) and justice with a moral tension and intellectual vigor that make him unique in the Genoese intellectual landscape.

Other Genoese citizens who attempted to emulate the Campofregoso also embraced a more refined lifestyle, overcoming the age-old demonization of *otium* (leisure) and showing greater interest in investing in intellectual products such as paintings, antiques, and books; in fact, the possession of a library became almost a social necessity. Interest in the classical world and a taste for antiques and collecting also increased the circulation of works of art and ancient texts: many Genoese were thereby involved in a burgeoning market for sculptures, medals, coins, gems, and codices imported mainly from the East.⁴⁶ In truth, the Genoese were less active as buyers than as merchants, acting as middlemen in vast commercial networks. They nonetheless chose particular products, influenced changes in taste, and managed to dictate alternative choices, as the case of Eliano Spinola di Luccoli shows.

Eliano (d. 1472), a member of one of Genoa's most prestigious noble families, occupied important public offices and developed a vast network of commercial, financial and naval interests reaching from Chios and the East to the Maghreb, Britain, and Flanders. During his frequent travels he collected statues, carpets, jewels, icons, and other antiques, which he supplied to the most exacting collectors of the time. He was a central figure in Genoese humanistic culture as well as in the international antique and collecting markets:⁴⁷ he demonstrated a particular fascination with the ancient Roman world, especially the imperial period, and with precious stones of all kinds, a predilection that showed "traces of that same medieval syncretism which had given new Christian symbolism to ancient pagan traditions that asserted the magical virtues of precious stones."⁴⁸

46 Petti Balbi, "Circolazione mercantile."

47 Bedocchi, "Eliano Spinola."

48 Ibid., 120.

Emblematic are a series of letters exchanged between Eliano Spinola di Luccoli and King Alfonso of Aragon circa 1456–7, and Eliano and his friend Cardinal Jacopo Ammanati Piccolomini between 1461 and 1466.⁴⁹ (According to some, Eliano's letters were actually written by Jacopo Bracelli.) The letters to the king of Naples chiefly concern a precious diamond, described either as *sardonicus* or *balascius* (perhaps a ruby), worthy of a royal treasure, which the king yearned to possess but which Eliano did not manage to get for him. Instead, he proposed a precious necklace, the work of a Moorish artisan, that had belonged to the queen of Granada. Conversely, the letters Eliano exchanged with the cardinal, while also concerned with family matters (especially with discouraging his son Domenico from becoming a monk), also show Cardinal Ammanati acting as an important intermediary between Eliano and Pope Paul II (r. 1464–71), who was interested in purchasing rare antiques of all kinds—icons, carpets, vases, and coins, which according to the pope Eliano “had collected from everywhere in Greece and Asia with his learned eyes.”⁵⁰

Especially after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Eliano's frequent visits to and knowledge of the East favored the importation of art treasures and increased his personal fortune, which was invested in the Banco di San Giorgio and partly devolved to the city. The 1479 inventory of his possessions, written on the occasion of the division of his inheritance, lists thirty-eight books whose value is estimated at 265 *genovini*: apart from a dozen religious works (some of them illuminated and extremely valuable), his collection included twenty of the most widespread classical works—including Cicero, Livy, Sallust, Plautus, and Valerius Maximus—as well as Petrarch's *De viribus illustribus* (*On Famous Men*). This confirms Eliano's personal interest in literature and support of humanist ideals, both of which are also evident in his friendship with Jacopo Bracelli and in the Latin translation of the epistles of Phalaris that Eliano dedicated to the humanist pope Pius II.⁵¹

A Laborious Path Towards the Renaissance

Influences from the Flemish world played an important role in the cultural renewal of the fifteenth century.⁵² The Genoese merchant-bankers who had strong commercial ties with northern Europe and were acquainted with the Burgundian court were fascinated by its refined culture. Both at home and

49 Ibid., 159–78.

50 Ibid., *passim*.

51 Ponte, “Letteratura,” 44.

52 See the related discussion in chap. 10, pp. 309–13.

abroad, they valued the economic and social prestige gained by a noble lifestyle, by the ostentatious display of jewels, paintings, and illuminated manuscripts, and by a generous artistic patronage which towards the end of the Middle Ages encouraged an influx of Flemish artists into Italy. Andreolo Giustiniani, Antoniotto Grillo, Nicolò Ceba, Eliano Spinola, and other members of the intellectual elite were among the main promoters of this phenomenon: once again, not professional intellectuals but men of power or politics, merchants, and chancellors—rarely interested in literary or artistic works—who (as in the past) corresponded with other intellectuals and rulers who wished to enlist their services.

These northern influences also explain the earliest attempts to introduce printing into the city: in 1471 two Flemish or German typographers were recruited by three Genoese, two of them doctors of law who understood the cultural significance and perhaps the economic potential of this new invention. After that attempt failed, along with others that followed—all partnerships between foreign and Genoese printers—in 1474 an incunabulum was printed in Genoa on a typically Ligurian theme: *La raxone de la Pasqua* (*The Calculation of Easter*), attributed to Jacopo Bracelli.⁵³ The book was actually a miscellaneous collection of practical and popular writings, containing a calendar, prayers, and verses by Petrarch along with a synoptic description of Liguria's physical geography and a brief list of eminent Genoese figures (the last two taken from the works of Jacopo Bracelli, regarding whom the anonymous compiler wrote an inspired panegyric). Although the new technology altered neither the kinds of books that circulated in Genoa nor their audiences, its rapid diffusion is attested in the *liber rationis* (account book) and the inventory of papermaker Bartolomeo Lupoto's workshop; dated 1487, about ten years after Lupoto's death, these list both manuscripts and printed books.⁵⁴

The choice of *La raxone* illustrates the features characteristic of Genoese culture and intellectual life. It was anchored in the concrete and the immediate; it was not averse to the smell of money, and it remained the domain of the few—mostly men of law, chancellors, and rulers rather than scholars and intellectuals in the strict sense. Therefore the exemplary model was the merchant—the businessman, not the intellectual—like the main character's father in the allegorical fable *De varia fortuna Antiochi* (*On the Changing Fortunes of Antioch*) written by the Savonese monk Lorenzo Traversagni in 1468.⁵⁵ One might ask how many Genoese were aware of and shared these interests, or if they at

53 Petti Balbi, *Primo incunabolo*.

54 Pistarino, *Bartolomeo Lupoto*.

55 Traversagni, *De varia fortuna Antiochi*.

least perceived the manifestations of the new cultural climate in what have been described as the “external characteristics” of humanism: urban embellishment, city residences, family chapels, and lavish suburban villas, as well as clothing and other forms of ostentation.⁵⁶

Despite negative stereotypes and accusations, the Genoese were not strangers to the cultural dynamics of the time, even if cultural and intellectual life long remained tied to traditional medieval models and types of writing, particularly a staunch devotion to the Latin language. But the vernacular, which at first was confined to devotional literature, eventually acquired increased legitimacy for private or official documents, as in chancellor Biagio Assereto's report on the victory of the Genoese fleet under his command against Alfonso v at Ponza (1435). The Genoese never demonstrated a strong inclination for purely intellectual studies or other artistic forms. Rather, they acknowledged artistic, literary, and cultural innovations while adopting those that fit local traditions and a pragmatic frame of mind, and continued to prefer particular intellectual forms: the *Annals*, whose aim was to preserve civic glory and collective memory; the applied sciences, such as cartography and astronomy; and juridical and religious texts. The fundamental requirements of immediacy and pragmatism did not favor escapist literature.

At the end of the fifteenth century, Battista II (doge 1478–83), a descendant of Tomaso Campofregoso endowed with a good education and cultural refinement, complained in his treatise *De dictis factisque memorabilibus* (*Memorable Deeds and Sayings*) that commerce continued to hinder the *otium* of the Genoese and encouraged their estrangement from literary and artistic interests. Nonetheless, he immediately reminded his son that “it is not letters but weapons which gave our forefathers glory, sovereignty, and triumph.”⁵⁷ Battista also penned a curious dialogue, the *Anteros*, in which he used frequent references to Greek and medieval thinkers such as Aristotle and Albertus Magnus to consider themes like the problem of the origins of love, the immorality of dancing, and the negative consequences of lust on virtue.⁵⁸

Once again, we must stress that Genoa's turbulent political climate obstructed the development of intellectual life, forcing many intellectuals to abandon the city and settle in more rewarding environments—such as Bartolomeo Fazio and Jacopo Curlo, who were welcomed at the Aragonese court. Before the sixteenth century, Genoa had no dynasty capable of holding power with any stability, and consequently of creating a court where political clientage and artistic and cultural patronage could develop. Nonetheless, the attempts of

56 For some examples, see chaps. 9, pp. 236–8, and 10, pp. 309–13.

57 Musso, “Cultura genovese.”

58 Ponte, “Letteratura,” 61–2.

the Campofregoso to establish a crypto-*signoria* and their relationships with a number of humanist chancellors seem to have been steps toward the merging of political and cultural interests, thoughts and actions, ideals and realities.

It was a long and gradual process, paralleling transformations in the economic and political spheres, with the shift from commerce to finance and the adoption of new institutional forms that stabilized during the early decades of the sixteenth century with Andrea Doria's court and reforms.⁵⁹ This process was made possible by changes of mentality, culture, custom; by contact with diverse peoples and cultures; and by the new organization of Europe and the Mediterranean. All of these factors led to the establishment of an original cultural fabric, a cosmopolitanism not just mercantile but also intellectual. This was rooted in the fifteenth century—a period once considered only a “time of transition,” but which more recent scholarship has rightly re-evaluated.

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The Church and Religious Life

Gervase Rosser

The character of the medieval Genoese church is immediately revealed by the west façade of the cathedral of Genoa (figs. 24–9).¹ Incorporated within the Gothic design are radically diverse elements. The triple openings at ground level and the rose window above speak the language of contemporary Paris, while the colored marbles, green and rose and white, announce their quite different origins in Genoa's arch-rival, Venice, and around the far-flung shores of the Mediterranean. Meanwhile, in the tympanum of the central portal, the extraordinary, naked figure of Saint Lawrence being martyred on the gridiron—the first fully nude monumental figure since antiquity—is the realistic creation of a cult peculiar in its intensity to the city of Genoa.² This diversity within unity is a metaphor for the theme of the present chapter. The centuries which followed the year 1000 saw Genoa acquire a distinctive and enduring civic identity. Although underwritten by the profits of commerce and military conquest, that identity found expression primarily in the language and forms of religious life. However, the city is differently characterized in diverse religious sources, and the historian, in order to avoid simplistic conclusions, needs to be sensitive to this variety of perspective. As a general observation this would be equally true of other medieval cities; in the case of Genoa the religious evidence highlights the distinctive character of this city which, notwithstanding successive attempts at consolidation, remained perennially fragmented both in its social composition and in its cultural life.

The Goal of Unity

From one perspective, it is possible to tell a story of the progressive unification of the city, together with its dependent territories, under the sign of the mother church of San Lorenzo and the small phalanx of saintly protectors whose relics were displayed within its walls (maps 6–7).³ Prior to the millennium, primacy

1 Cf. related discussions in chaps. 9, pp. 224–7, and 10, pp. 293–4 and 300–04.

2 *CGM*, 17, 141–81.

3 On the church as a unifying force, see also chap. 8, pp. 201–2.

amongst ecclesiastical settlements in the urbanized area had in fact been enjoyed by a different church: that of San Siro, Genoa's first cathedral. That eminence was challenged from AD 569 by the temporary ascendance in the city of the clergy of the cathedral of Milan, who for political reasons chose to exploit their right to reside in the Ligurian city for about seventy years, subject as Genoa was to the Milanese archdiocese. The Lombards constructed a rival center, focused on a church which they dedicated to their Milanese patron, Saint Ambrose. But it was not until the late tenth century that the center of religious gravity in the city was permanently moved, at least in part for reasons of security: destructive attacks by Fatimids in the 930s exposed San Siro's vulnerable situation outside the existing city walls. The change was announced at the start of the eleventh century: in 1007 the church of San Siro was taken over by a community of Benedictine monks, and in 1020 Bishop Landulf solemnly translated the relics of the fourth-century bishop Syrus to the newly promoted cathedral of San Lorenzo (fig. 24). Burials found in the vicinity of San Lorenzo show that a church had existed here from the fourth century; but this moment in the early eleventh century was a watershed of great importance both for the church and for the city.⁴ Over the course of the ensuing two centuries, Genoa's new mother church would grow in a symbiotic relationship with the emerging city commune. The basis for the prominence of San Lorenzo in the later medieval townscape was not the intrinsic power of the bishop, but rather the desire of leading families to associate themselves with the cathedral and with its prestigious holy patrons.⁵

The secular elite of the city did much to shape the cathedral itself during the formative twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Genoa's participation in the First Crusade was opposed by merchants of the city who anticipated damage to commercial relations with the Islamic world. But the ensuing narrative of the city's glorious contribution to the Christian recovery of Jerusalem in 1099 was formative for Genoa's self-construction as a capital of Christian orthodoxy and piety.⁶ In Jerusalem itself, an inscription in golden letters recorded the privileges granted to Genoa in the east by King Baldwin in reward for its participation in the crusade.⁷ Over the following century profits from the eastern venture flowed into the rebuilding of the cathedral of San Lorenzo: an investment which must have been the definite policy of leading families of the city. The incomplete church was consecrated by Pope Gelasius II in 1118 (with

4 *CGM*, 20.

5 Polonio, "Universalismo," 77–87.

6 *Ibid.*, 94–5; see discussion in chap. 8, pp. 203–5, and chap. 17 generally.

7 Polonio, "Universalismo," 122–3; also chap. 17, pp. 475–6.

its joint dedication to Saints Syrus and Lawrence), and shortly afterwards the papal diplomacy of the Genoese patriciate yielded still more substantial returns when, in 1133, by an act of major ecclesiastical and political importance, Innocent II elevated the diocese to the status of an archbishopric. The promotion did not merely secure independence from the powerful see of Milan—in itself a momentous development for the city and church of Genoa—but in addition brought under Genoese control newly subject ecclesiastical territories, including half of the island of Corsica. The dioceses of Brugnato (to the east) and Bobbio (to the north) were also made subject to the Genoese archbishop at this time; later in the century the bishoprics of Noli and Albenga along the riviera to the west were incorporated into the archdiocese. This territorial and institutional consolidation of the ecclesiastical power of Genoa ran somewhat ahead of the city's temporal control of its hinterland.⁸ Indeed, since the secular polity of the Genoese republic was never formally constituted by a unifying political act, it could be said that throughout the later Middle Ages, the territorial state of Genoa had a more tangible and effective existence under the sign of the archbishop than under that of the doge. Further assistance to the papacy during Alexander III's quarrel with Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in 1162 earned the city supplementary ecclesiastical grants, including the designation of the Genoese church as "overseas legate" of the pontiff.

From 1140 the consuls of the city assigned the proceeds of tolls to the building work of the cathedral, and the episcopal palace itself was erected starting in 1145 with public funds. In the same period, the first civic seal embodied this fusion of the destinies of the city and its church: on one side appeared an image of the city gate (*ianua*) with the legend *Civitas Ianuensis* (City of Genoa), and on the other the figure of Saint Syrus, surrounded by the inscription *Archiepiscopus Ianuensis* (Archbishop of Genoa).⁹ Around 1150 the Genoese participation in the Iberian crusade, which had recently contributed to the reconquest of Minorca, Almería, and Tortosa, was commemorated in frescoes on the nave walls of the cathedral.¹⁰ When fear of an attack by Frederick Barbarossa led to the construction of new urban defenses in the 1150s, the archbishop pawned the cathedral's treasures in order to pay for the work while men and women of the city carried stones and plaster for the masons.¹¹ One of the inscriptions on the Porta Soprana, erected at this time, celebrated again the Genoese involvement in the Christian *Reconquista* of Spain (fig. 5). From 1174,

8 See chap. 2, p. 51.

9 *IELM*, 122–9; *CGM*, 127–8.

10 Di Fabio, "Pitture," 17; *CGM*, 88–91.

11 On this crisis, see chaps. 8, pp. 195–6, and 9, pp. 221–2.

charitable bequests by citizens were taxed to support the cathedral, the explicit rationale being given that “its construction concerns all the inhabitants.”¹² Meetings of the citizens *in pleno parlamento* (in full assembly) were held in the cathedral, and in public documents the city (*universitas Ianuensium*) was equivalent to “the archbishop, the consuls, and the collectivity of the whole commune” (*archiepiscopus, consules et multitudo tocius comunis*).¹³ The city and its mother church were evolving as reflections of each other, and indeed in 1201 a diplomatic document refers to the cathedral as “the mirror of the city of Genoa” (*speculum Ianue civitatis*).¹⁴

From 1133, Saints Syrus and Lawrence were joined in the calendar of civic festivals by Saint John the Baptist. The appropriation of the ashes of the Baptist from Myra (on the southern coast of modern Turkey) in 1098, during the course of the First Crusade, was evidently carried out as an act of the emergent Genoese state. In 1179 papal approval was secured for the veneration of these relics, and about the same period a silver reliquary casket was made in which to carry them in the annual civic procession on 24 June, the saint’s feast day (fig. 49). The figurative representation on the side of the shrine, showing the dance of Salome before Herod and the bringing of the Baptist’s head on a dish, may indicate that at other times it was displayed to public devotion in the chapel at the east end of the north aisle of the cathedral.¹⁵ A century later the Genoese archbishop Jacopo da Varagine wrote a short treatise (drawing upon an earlier text of 1133) about the saint and his relics, together with a popular version in verse, to be sung. In 1327 the Baptist was formally designated the “patron, protector, and father” of the city of Genoa.¹⁶ The *consorteria* or confraternity of Saint John the Baptist, founded in the second centenary of the relics’ arrival in 1299, undertook the double role of overseeing the fabric of the cathedral and the works of the port.¹⁷ From the outset, the saint was perceived as a potential force for secular unity in the city. An early miracle recorded in 1133 was that the initial plan for the return of the ashes from Myra to Genoa had been to divide them between the diverse vessels of different captains, but a contrary storm had indicated this to be an error, and they were kept together—just as, it was hoped in the city, the diverse powerful families would agree to

12 CGM, 127–8. On the parallel growth of Genoese secular and ecclesiastical hegemony in Liguria, see chaps. 2, 13, and 18.

13 IELM, 126; CGM, 128.

14 CGM, 128; Scarsella, *Comune dei consoli*, 74–7.

15 CGM, 190, fig. 85. See also discussions in chap. 8, p. 199, and 9, p. 227.

16 Persoglio, *San Giovanni*, 215.

17 Calcagnino, *Historia*; Polonio, “L’arrivo”; Garnett/Rosser, “Reliquie.”

bury their differences in the civic interest.¹⁸ The reliquary became the regular site of scenes of public reconciliation between warring factions, whose leaders would swear while touching the relics to keep the peace.¹⁹ As the Baptist became identified with the expanding republic, subject towns were obliged from 1202 to send each year, on the feast day, a tribute of a large candle to be offered at the shrine; and a synod of 1375 imposed the annual celebration of the feast upon the entire diocese.²⁰ The original *cassa* was replaced in the mid-fifteenth century by an extraordinary enamel and gilt reliquary (fig. 50) in the form of a miniature cathedral which, in procession, transported the presence of the mother church into the streets of the city (fig. 51). The blessing of the Genoese harbor by the saint in the annual procession (which continues today) was understood to guarantee the protection of commerce, and storms which threatened the ships were said to have been abated through his miraculous intervention.²¹ The perceived importance of the Baptist in the life of Genoa was underlined by the commission by the saint's confraternity in 1448 of a new chapel in the north aisle of the cathedral (figs. 34–5), a project first directed by the sculptor Domenico Gagini and brought to completion at the turn of the sixteenth century with multiple statues in Carrara marble by Matteo Civitali and Andrea Sansovino.²² This was a cult constructed, with determination and some success, as a civic religion.

The protection of the Baptist was supplemented by the presence in the cathedral of further venerated treasures, of which the most celebrated (and admired by all visitors) was a polygonal green glass dish (probably of Fatimid manufacture from ninth- or tenth-century Egypt, although possibly of Palestinian origin in the first or second century), reputedly brought to Genoa from Caesarea after the First Crusade in 1101—thought to be made of emerald and subsequently, in accounts dating from the thirteenth century, held to be nothing less than the Holy Grail, or the dish used by Christ at the Last Supper (fig. 46).²³ Numerous additional sacred objects were acquired by various means from Byzantine sources. Genoa's association with Byzantium was

18 Jacopo da Varagine, *Historia sive legenda*, 484–5; Polonio, "L'arrivo"; Bertini Guidetti, *Potere e propaganda*, 87–8.

19 Polonio, "L'arrivo," 51.

20 Calcagnino, *Historia*, 107; Cambiaso, *L'anno ecclesiastico*, 173–8.

21 Calderoni Masetti/Ameri, "Genova e Fiandre," 26–8.

22 Di Fabio, "Bisanzio a Genova," 65; *CGM*, 188–91; Tagliaferro, "Secolo di marmo," 260–1. For the platter of the head of John the Baptist in the cathedral treasury (fig. 45)—a classical dish which was enhanced in the 1420s by the addition a white enamel image of the saint's head—see Cherry, "Dish."

23 *CGM*, 188–90, and fig. 82; Ameri, "Tempore enim."

different from that which tied its maritime rival Venice by an umbilical cord to the eastern capital; and yet contact was recurrent, and left profound traces in the religious life of the city. A “cross of Saint Helen,” containing a relic of the True Cross of Christ, was appropriated from the Venetians after the sack of Constantinople in 1204.²⁴ The Genoese thus benefited from an act of sacrilege in which they did not take direct part. Their intervention, however, to assist in establishing the Palaeologan family as emperors of Byzantium in 1261 was rewarded not only by the grant of the Constantinopolitan colony of Pera but by the diplomatic gift to the Genoese cathedral of decorated liturgical silk cloths, dyed in imperial purple, of which one, for public display on the high altar, showed the Emperor Michael VIII entering the church of San Lorenzo, flanked by Saint Lawrence and Saint Syrus (the *pallio di San Lorenzo*, fig. 47).²⁵ The work, executed either in Trebizond or in Constantinople, showed the emperor and the saintly patrons of Genoa with Latin inscriptions for better comprehension. While glorying in the prestige of their alliance, however, the Genoese were not eager to embrace the imperial message of Byzantine overlordship, and indeed by 1386 an inventory of the cathedral reveals that the second cloth, which bore a portrait of the emperor, had been removed.²⁶ A later Byzantine Emperor, John VI, rewarded Leonardo Montaldo, a Genoese war-leader (and later doge) who had lent assistance against the Turks, with another extraordinary gift: the *Face of Christ* or *Mandylion* which had supposedly been sent by Christ himself to King Abgar of Edessa (fig. 13).²⁷ It had previously been held in great veneration in Constantinople, and following its donation to his native city by Montaldo on his death in 1384, it became the *palladium* of Genoa. Since the 1370s, this miraculous image “not made by human hands” has been preserved in the suburban church of San Bartolomeo degli Armeni, from where, in moments of civic crisis, it has occasionally been brought to the cathedral.²⁸

The adoption of Saint George as a patron of the city was a further import from the eastern Mediterranean. Although appropriated early by the commune—his banner being carried, for example, in the war against Pisa in 1242—the city does not appear to have been rich in his relics before the late

24 Di Fabio, “Tesoro,” 124–5; Polonio, “Universalismo,” 153–6; Müller, “Genova vittoriosa.”

25 On the *pallio*, cf. chap. 10, pp. 304–6; on the Treaty of Nymphaeum: chap. 17, p. 490, and 18, pp. 507–8.

26 Di Fabio, “Tesoro”; Di Fabio, “Bisanzio a Genova,” 56–65; Toth, “Narrative Fabric” and “Tessuti d’oltremare.”

27 Discussed also in chap. 10, pp. 308–9.

28 Dufour Bozzo, *Sacro Volto*; Kessler/Wolf, *Holy Face*; Wolf et al., *Mandylion*; Garnett/Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 83–4.

fourteenth century, when trophies of ultimately eastern Christian origin, taken from the Venetians, included an arm and a leg of the saint.²⁹ The capture of Pola, in Istria, from the Venetians in 1381 also resulted in the arrival in the cathedral of diverse other relics, including part of the head of Saint Lawrence himself.³⁰ Another acquisition from the east, a reliquary of the arm of Saint James in the cathedral treasury (fig. 48), is a palimpsest, comprising an older Byzantine element with a Greek inscription and a later Latin inscription of 1317 which links its acquisition to a major restoration of the cathedral then being brought to completion. At the same date the reliquary was endowed with a modelled hand to represent the saint: a figurative element which was not a priority for such objects in Byzantium, but which suited western expectations.³¹ Similarly, the Greek painters (probably including “Mark the Greek from Constantinople,” recorded in the city in 1313) who executed frescoes at the beginning of the fourteenth century in the reconstructed west end of the cathedral, while revealing their origin in the outstanding quality of their Constantinopolitan art, none the less adapted themselves to an iconographic program determined by their Genoese patrons—who must have been the secular commune, albeit with the support of the archbishop. The representation of *Christ in Majesty* on the internal west wall was flanked by images, on the nave walls and over the side portals, of the civic saints Lawrence, John the Baptist, George, and Peter (figs. 36–9). The last-named now trumped the local Saint Syrus, having been identified by Archbishop Jacopo da Varagine (1292–8) as the suitably prestigious and Roman first founder of the church of Genoa.³² In diverse ways, sacred relics and art of eastern origin were thus reframed for consumption in the western city.³³ The period at which the various elements of the city’s sacred image were brought into sharpest and most coherent focus coincided with the pontificate of Jacopo da Varagine and the partial reconstruction of the cathedral by the commune following serious damage during fighting between rival factions in the 1290s. In his history of the city and in his sermons, Jacopo da Varagine insisted upon Genoa’s divinely willed unity and destiny, from its Petrine foundation to its leadership of the crusades.³⁴

29 Cambiaso, *L'anno ecclesiastico*, 137–41.

30 *CARG* 4.149.

31 Di Fabio, “Tesoro,” 130–33; compare Ameri, “Nuove considerazioni.”

32 Discussed elsewhere in chaps. 9, p. 228, and 10, p. 306. On the cult of Saint George: chap. 8, pp. 204–5.

33 See chap. 10 of this volume more generally.

34 Bertini Guidetti, *Potere e propaganda*; cf. also discussions in chaps. 8, pp. 198–9, and 11, pp. 327–8.

A Persistent Diversity

Yet if the cathedral presented diverse elements syncretized into a coherent civic and sacred iconography, Genoa's cosmopolitan openness to external influences fostered at the same time a fissiparous tendency to fragmentation. The city was a Babel of languages, cultures, and religious affiliations. The various mercantile communities of strangers acquired over time their respective loggias, where they would gather to discuss business, and their chapels, the focus of their particular devotions.³⁵ The loggia of the Pisans was to be found close to the church of San Torpete, a cult brought to Genoa by the Pisans themselves (by whose coastal trade it was taken also to Saint-Tropez on the southern French coast), just as the church of Santa Zita owed its dedication to the presence of merchants from Lucca, who worshipped in a chapel there and who maintained their own loggia in the Piazza dei Banchi.³⁶ The Milanese and other Lombard traders were attached to their patronal church of Sant'Ambrogio, where they dedicated a new chapel in 1449. The society of Bergamaschi, known as the *Compagnia dei Caravana*, had its chapel from 1340 in the church of the Carmelites, and processed behind a late-medieval Spanish carved crucifix. The citizens of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) held meetings of their *natio* (resident community) in the church of San Biagio, while the Greeks congregated in a chapel in Santa Maria delle Vigne. A minority of these groups was composed of wealthy merchants, but the proliferation of foreigners within the city of Genoa—including numerous artisans, soldiers, travellers, and others of modest means—gave rise in 1393 to the creation of an inclusive religious confraternity for outsiders: the *Consorteria dei Forestieri*. This body comprised four "nations": German, Lombard, Roman, and *Oltremare* (overseas). Based in the extramural church of Santa Maria dei Servi, where it also maintained a small hospital for its members, the guild was dedicated to Saint Barbara and to the Madonna della Misericordia—the Virgin Mary who enfolds all without discrimination in the protective embrace of her cloak—whose image was painted on the still extant banner which was used by the society in its processions.³⁷ That Marian image offered an alternative identity to the many foreigners who lived in Genoa but were not fully incorporated in the city.

35 Poleggi, "Topografia"; Petti Balbi, "Presenze straniere." On foreigners in Genoa more generally: chap. 7, pp. 181–6.

36 Petti Balbi, "Presenza lucchese."

37 Franchini Guelfi, *Le casacce*, 16–17. The banner of the *Consorteria dei Forestieri*, recently conserved, is in the modern church of Santa Maria dei Servi in Genoa.

Its cosmopolitanism was not the city's sole principle of ecclesiastical disunity. The history of the formation and privileges of particular family churches (*chiese gentilizie*) presents a contrasting narrative to that of the unification of the Genoese under the tutelary civic saints. By the thirteenth century, some twenty-five parishes were mapped onto the area within the recently constructed city walls. Some of these parochial churches were crystallized out of the jurisdiction of urban monasteries; others from that of the cathedral itself; but a significant number were controlled by patrician families, by whom they were treated as personal fiefdoms. Numerous legal disputes during the decades around 1200 were insufficient to dislodge the aristocratic hold on a series of city churches which would remain, throughout and beyond the medieval period, as a manifestation of the enduring power of the factional *consorterie*.³⁸ The aristocratic churches of Genoa do not appear clearly in the record prior to the eleventh or twelfth century; but it is more than likely that some, at least, had earlier origins as family chapels, to which formal parochial rights began to be attached in the context of the cathedral's consolidation of its own authority in the twelfth century, especially under Archbishop Siro II (1130–63). Such a pattern could be paralleled in other medieval European cities, but what is striking in the case of Genoa is the endurance of the *chiese gentilizie* as visible images of the political autonomy and cultural patronage of their owners.

Ecclesiastical politics were not the least significant aspect of the aristocratic rivalries which continued, throughout the Middle Ages, to characterize the public life of the city. Indeed, factional conflict itself created a need for family churches to provide sacraments when the members of a *casata* were barricaded by their enemies within their respective courtyards and towers. Oberto Spinola, justifying in 1188 his right to found a church of San Luca, with parochial rights, adjacent to his family house, claimed with some plausibility that he could not safely attend services in the local church of San Siro because of the threats of his enemies. The city annals describe how in 1194 the della Volta set up a *machina* in the cemetery of San Siro, in order to hurl stones at the houses and towers of the Spinola and the associated Grimaldi.³⁹ The parochial community of such a family church would comprise the immediate relatives of the patron together with all of his permanent household and dependents. Complaints concerning the allocation of tithes and other dues led to such clarifications as that which the Doria family secured in 1440 from Pope Eugenius IV, in respect of their church of San Matteo, that the congregation included the

38 Moresco, "Parocchie"; *UCP*, 116–22. See also the discussions of Genoese *alberghi*: chaps. 7, pp. 172–3, and 9, pp. 232–4.

39 *AGC* for 1194, 2.44–5; Moresco, "Nota sulla fondazione."

noble family and all of its *familiars continui* (regular associates). Given the substantial extent of the urban estates occupied by the larger families, which can still be witnessed today in the configuration and the decoration of buildings around the Piazza San Matteo of the Doria⁴⁰ or the Piazza Cattaneo of the patrons of San Torpete (where an underground tunnel links the palace to the church), such aristocratic ecclesiastical strongholds were a prominent element in the map of the medieval city. The clerical establishments of these churches could be both large and prestigious. If San Torpete was served by a simple rector, the Fieschi church of Santa Maria in Via Lata (fig. 8) on the hill of Carignano was served in the later Middle Ages by a substantial ecclesiastical establishment comprising a deacon, twelve canons, eight chaplains, and four clerks.⁴¹ The extent to which such patronage was bound up with the secular identity of the families concerned is still manifest at San Matteo, where the church bears a series of medieval inscriptions honoring in the same breath the piety, the civic duty, and the family honor of successive members of the Doria (figs. 9–10). The façade (fig. 9) which carries inscriptions recording Doria leadership in historic victories over Pisa in 1284 and Venice in 1298 and 1352, is decorated over the door with an image of the family's patron saint in mosaic (fig. 11). Erected in 1278, this was originally complemented by a mosaic image of Christ the Redeemer inside the choir of the church. The essentially Byzantine medium of mosaic made a powerful statement about both the political and the religious pretensions of the Doria. As another inscription at the high altar records, the family's service to the Byzantine emperor in the Black Sea in the 1290s was rewarded by the gift of the body of Saint Anastasia, who was consequently reinterred in the Genoese church. Another announces the presence of the bodies of the martyrs Saint Maurus and Saint Eleutherius, which Pagano Doria brought from Istria after defeating the Venetians there in 1354. To mark the civic significance of that victory, representatives of the Genoese government brought a gold cloth as a gift to San Matteo each year on the anniversary.⁴² The religion of the great families was an ambivalent resource for the city as a whole, with the potential to be both strengthening and divisive.

Other churches grew out of the collaborative investment of various families, to acquire the role of neighborhood centers which, like the *chiese gentilizie*, could develop their own character and continue to resist hierarchical intervention by the cathedral. A prominent case in point was Santa Maria delle Vigne, which arose in the eleventh century or earlier in an extramural district still, at

40 Discussed in chap. 9, pp. 233–5.

41 Cervetto, *Santa Caterina*, 3–4.

42 D'Oria, *Chiesa di San Matteo*.

that date, characterized by its vineyards. Aristocratic landlords documented here in the period must have provided the land and endowed the clergy, which by 1227 had grown to a community of ten. By now parochial status had been won. Charitable institutions for foundlings and for the poor were attached to the church, which continued to serve the needs of the increasingly urbanized district. At the end of the fourteenth century a consortium of nobles living in the adjacent square made a gift to the church, through their officers, of three books, including a volume of stories of the saints (perhaps that composed by Jacopo da Varagine, known as the *Golden Legend*) for use in preaching: the collective patronage indicates a sense of common ownership of the church itself. The principal feast of the church was that of the Virgin Mary's Assumption on 15 August, and in the later Middle Ages peaks of donations recorded at this time of year indicate the presence of visitors from beyond the parish.⁴³ An image in the church of the *Virgin and Child*, painted by Taddeo di Bartolo ca. 1400 (fig. 12), was later, around 1600, said to have a history of working miracles, and it is possible that Santa Maria delle Vigne was already in the later Middle Ages the focus of a cult of this kind, as it would be again in the early modern period. The prestige of a miraculous painting would have consolidated the independence of the church. In the seventeenth century the community of Santa Maria delle Vigne would engage in vigorous legal debate with the cathedral clergy regarding its antiquity and its autonomy, drawing both upon the supernatural status of its miraculous images (the panel by Taddeo di Bartolo was now paired with a new and also wonder-working statue) and upon a long medieval tradition of local aristocratic support to vindicate its rights.⁴⁴

Diverse roles embedded each of the local churches in the society of its immediate neighborhood. One such role was educational: at Santa Maria delle Vigne and also at San Donato, a master was maintained from the thirteenth century to provide school-teaching, while Santa Maria di Castello at the same period offered teaching in theology. Genoa had no university in the medieval period, but its churches, including in particular those of the mendicants, offered a wide and sophisticated range of teaching (supplemented in the later Middle Ages by increasing numbers of secular schools).⁴⁵ Dramatic processions and religious theater were further ways in which parish churches formed the culture of those who grew up in their vicinity. An annual procession for the feast of the Holy Innocents is recorded from perhaps as early as the twelfth century at the church of Santa Maria di Castello, which housed relics of the innocent

43 Polonio, "Santuario," 11–28.

44 Garnett/Rosser, *Spectacular Miracles*, 95–9, 140–1.

45 Petti Balbi, *L'insegnamento*, 30–9. See discussion in chap. 11, pp. 322–3.

children; and an inventory from 1495 of the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie beside the port records “clothes for two kings or magi,” for a Christmas play. As the creations of local communities, the churches reflected the concerns of the laity of the quarter. Their associated festivities did not always meet with clerical approval: celebrations of the Ascension of Christ were criticized by the synod of 1375 for their secular excesses (later sources refer to dancing on this occasion), and priests were forbidden to attend.⁴⁶ In the case of the church of San Teodoro, the founders of the small clerical community of canons regular in about 1100 were lay men and women who, together with certain clerks, thus created another form of local ecclesiastical provision.⁴⁷ The little church of San Vittore on the waterfront in the harbor, which was also founded in the twelfth century, developed its parochial role in relation to the fluctuating community of sailors both on shore and on board ship: its functions extended to the crews, including the slaves and prisoners who served as oarsmen on the galleys.⁴⁸ San Marco al Molo, also situated on the quayside, was the foundation of two neighboring families, the Steggiaporco and the Nepitella.⁴⁹ Thus each of these churches took on, and in turn helped to shape, the particular character of its neighborhood.

The monastic foundations of the city, which are discussed more extensively in a separate chapter of this book⁵⁰, were also intimately associated with their lay patrons. The Franciscan presence in the city, for example, was promoted from the outset by the Fieschi family. The site occupied by the main Franciscan house at Castelletto from the 1230s was provided from this source, which also sponsored (together with others, including the Spinola family) the establishment of Poor Clares at Santa Caterina (from 1228) and the later foundation of Franciscan nuns at San Leonardo, on the Fieschi hill of Carignano. The involvement of patrician families in such communities went beyond material support: it was typical that the prioress of the nunnery of Santa Caterina in 1266 was Agnese Fieschi. It was equally characteristic of the family’s combination of piety and religious politics that, when a member of the clan, Sinibaldo Fieschi, was elected pope as Innocent IV (1243–54), the chapter general of the Franciscan Order was held in 1244 at Castelletto.⁵¹ The Dominicans, whose monastery of San Domenico was erected in the 1220s on land provided by the Doria, would

46 Cambiaso, *L'anno ecclesiastico*, 32, 36, 57–8.

47 Bosio, *Chiesa di San Teodoro*.

48 Frondoni, “San Vittore,” 143–74.

49 *IELM*, 144.

50 Chap. 13, on the religious orders.

51 Polonio, “Universalismo,” 133–6; Casini, *Provincia*, 43–6.

over time receive for burial a series of patricians, including several from their most prominent patronal family. Among high status fourteenth-century tombs in the church were those of Ansaldo Doria (1331), Galeozzo Doria (1336) and his wife Teodora Spinola, Pagano Doria (*ca.* 1360), and Andreolo Doria (1365).⁵² Subventions from the public purse towards building costs could not obscure the fact that these and other urban monastic foundations were treated by the great families as extensions of their respective cultural networks.

The politics of aristocratic ecclesiastical patronage were at all periods compatible with serious spiritual commitment. The adoption of a new devotion might be at once a question of fashion and an expression of piety. When Pope John XXII in 1334 promoted the cult of the Holy Trinity as a universal feast of the Church, Genoese aristocrats were quick to respond. Percivalle Grillo (d. 1340) founded a chapel of the Holy Trinity at the church of Santa Maria delle Vigne; another was established at Sant'Andrea della Porta in 1369 by Salvagia Arpe; and at the same period Papiniano Fieschi founded one in the cathedral.⁵³ In 1490 the house in Genoa of Giovanni Adorno was the setting for a performance of a play of Christ and the Pilgrims of Emmaus. In the same period members of the Sauli, a patrician family renowned for their piety, were the recipients of dedications by the theologian and humanist Agostino Giustiniani of two of his books, respectively a translation of Theophrastus and a work on the seventy-two names of God.⁵⁴

The medieval Genoese church was thus profoundly imprinted with the character of its secular inhabitants and in particular with the presence of the city's great families. In the thirteenth century, during the crucial period of the consolidation of the cathedral chapter, the Fieschi family, who owned property surrounding the church, insinuated into that body a series of their own members, with lasting consequences for the history of San Lorenzo. A sign of the family's enormous influence within the cathedral is the grandiose marble tomb (now removed to the diocesan museum from its former dedicated chapel in the basilica) of Luca Fieschi, who had been made a cardinal by Pope Boniface VIII and died at the papal court at Avignon in 1336 (fig. 41). The cardinal appeared in effigy with two angels, above a frieze in which Christ is shown standing with the verification of his wounds by the twelve Apostles; the whole structure was supported by four lions.⁵⁵ Later, in 1436, the doge evidently pressured Pope Eugenius IV to promote Giorgio Fieschi to the archbishopric. In a

52 Botto, "Ricostruzione," 209–11.

53 Cambiaso, *L'anno ecclesiastico*, 49, 61.

54 Musso, *Cultura genovese*, 22–6.

55 *CGM*, 304–9. See also discussion in chap. 9, pp. 228–9.

letter of this year the same doge wrote to the pope to press (again successfully) for the appointment of another Fieschi to the see of Vercelli. In the letter he emphasized the family's enormous power and stressed that "for many centuries the house of Fieschi has fought for the church, both in quiet and in turbulent times."⁵⁶ The next doge, Pietro Campofregoso, as if to underline the autonomy of the city in these matters, persuaded the new pope—conveniently, Nicholas v was from nearby Sarzana, where the Campofregoso were in the ascendant—to appoint as archbishop of Genoa the doge's own brother, the twenty-two-year-old Paolo Campofregoso. Archbishop Paolo Campofregoso (1452–98) would gain further clerical preferment as a cardinal and papal legate (to which roles he was elevated by Sixtus IV, another Ligurian pope) and concurrently himself held office three times as doge of the Genoese republic. Ousted for a while, he fought the government as a pirate, against whom the senate declared war.⁵⁷ Not much had changed since the 1290s—when the cathedral, fortified and attacked by rival factions of Guelfs and Ghibellines, had been badly damaged, leaving the west end destroyed, the roof burned and stonework calcinated by the fire, as can still be seen today.⁵⁸

The Devotion of the Laity

But the churches could not have served the prestige and power of patricians had they not also developed as sites of devotion and charity. Here again, the localism of particular neighborhoods spoke through the foundation and patronage of singular institutions. Lay men and women found diverse religious ways to respond to the perceived challenges of urban society. Some associated themselves formally with local churches: it was often the case that an initial foundation by patrician patronage was followed by the involvement of socially less elevated contributors. At Santa Maria di Castello in the thirteenth century, a woman is recorded—in the fashion of a great many others in the period—to have become a professed *conversa*, a lay assistant of the community of canons serving the church: she probably helped to run the hospice which was part of the complex. The hospital which existed at the cathedral was being managed in 1205 by another woman, Alda de Mirta.⁵⁹ The grander hospital for pilgrims at San Giovanni di Prè, founded by the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem

⁵⁶ The letter, now in the ASG, is cited in *IELM*, 169.

⁵⁷ *IELM*, 135–7, 168–70, 359.

⁵⁸ *CGM*, 223.

⁵⁹ Polonio, "Universalismo," 126–7, and "Canonici," 48.

before 1182, also offered a role for those known as “external collaborators,” men and women of the locality who assisted with hospitality and the care of the sick.⁶⁰ The mendicants also catalyzed lay involvement through the third orders: men and women who became part of the organization while remaining in their secular lives. The first men of the Franciscan third order are recorded in 1266; women appear from 1308.⁶¹ Many of the laity became involved in charitable work of various kinds; no fewer than eighteen hospice foundations are recorded between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. One of the more substantial, the leper hospital with fifty beds at Capodifaro, was the initiative in 1150 of a lay couple, Buono Martino and his wife, who secured assistance from the commune and the cathedral.⁶²

The grass roots of religious life in the medieval city were most evident and vigorous in the numerous confraternities through which lay men and women furthered diverse devotional and charitable practices, and frequently worked to bring peace amongst the warring clans of the city’s nobility. These groups were seen as a restraining force upon the fratricidal tendencies of the factions. At least a dozen of these associations were in existence by the end of the thirteenth century, and almost a score were listed at the start of the fifteenth: these are minimal figures. Their social composition varied. A few were corporations of craft-workers, like the goldsmiths’ guild based in the church of Santa Maria delle Vigne, whose statutes were confirmed in 1248.⁶³ Most, however, comprised a more diverse membership, in some if not all cases including both men and women. A confraternity based in Santa Maria delle Vigne, where a relic of the true Cross was venerated, was described in its fifteenth-century records as “the company of maid-servants and man-servants of the Holy Cross.” This society evidently played an honorable role on the annual feast day of the Holy Cross, when all the civic confraternities processed first to the cathedral and then to the Madonna delle Vigne.⁶⁴ Some of the societies, at all periods, were penitential in character, using flagellation in order to empathize with the sufferings of the crucified Christ and to call for spiritual repentance and reconciliation amongst both members of the guild and those who witnessed their frequently public processions. “The house of *disciplinati* of Saint Anthony in the convent of the Dominicans” was recorded in 1232, shortly before the “Great Hallelujah” movement of such flagellant groups which swept through north

60 Persoglio, *Sant’Ugo*.

61 Polonio, “Nome di Francesco,” and “Universalismo,” 137. Cf. discussion in chap. 13, pp. 381–4.

62 Polonio, “Universalismo,” 139–40.

63 Cambiaso, *L’anno ecclesiastico*, 270.

64 *Ibid.*, 152–4.

Italy in 1233.⁶⁵ The even more widespread, millenarian penitential movement of 1260 saw thousands of lay men and women beating themselves and calling for "charity and peace." The civic historians described how on arrival in the city of Genoa they congregated at the Franciscan church at Castelletto before making their shocking progress through the city streets, eventually provoking the citizens to join them and to form in turn new local associations of *battuti* (flagellants). A later moment of this kind arrived in 1399, the year of the Bianchi movement, which took northwest Italy by storm. The appearance of the white-robed penitents converted many, and according to the historian Stella, the citizens, "when they saw the procession, were moved by a great spirit of compassion and repentance, and hearing the cries of 'peace' and 'charity', they burst into tears."⁶⁶ A later historian, Giustiniani, similarly recorded that, after a week of processions by the Bianchi in Genoa, "many reconciliations (*molte paci*) were brought about and numerous religious works of piety and charity."⁶⁷ Shortly afterwards, in 1405, the charismatic preacher Vincent Ferrer came to the city, where he instituted a reform of the flagellant and Bianchi societies, to which he issued new regulations (one late-medieval tendency was to limit the participation of women in the penitential confraternities; they continued to belong to guilds of other kinds). The groups still held an unusual prominence in Genoa in the early sixteenth century, when Giustiniani described their procession on Good Friday:

One could not say too much of the pious devotion manifested each year by the flagellant brothers of the twenty oratories or confraternities in the city. On the night of Good Friday, some five thousand people dress in sackcloth ... and process barefoot through the churches, with beautiful ceremonies. In complete silence they beat their shoulders with ropes tied with sharp points of silver so that there is such an effusion of blood, that not only the good and the devout but even the wicked and obstinate are moved to compassion. It is believed that they have often placated God's anger; and there is no doubt that this observance of flagellants has no equal in all Christendom.⁶⁸

Saint Vincent Ferrer brought new religious songs for the Genoese confraternities to sing. The collective singing of *laudi* was one of the distinctive activities

65 Cambiaso, "Le casacce," 82.

66 AG, 236–41, esp. 239; CARG, 4.166; Bornstein, *Bianchi*, 56–61.

67 CARG, 4.166; Cambiaso, "Casacce," 87.

68 CARG, 1.15; Cambiaso, "Casacce," 95–6.

of these guilds, and a number of the confraternity songs, in the dialect of the Genoese Riviera, were collected in two partially surviving manuscripts, respectively of *ca.* 1300 and *ca.* 1400.⁶⁹ The very fact that two copies of this sequence have come down to us, albeit in transcriptions marked by some significant divergences, may be an indication that the songs in question circulated widely, and often by oral rather than textual transmission (which would explain the inconsistencies in the written versions). The two dozen songs in this collection are arranged in a liturgical sequence, according to the time of the religious calendar when they were suitable to be sung, underlining the way in which the lay confraternities responded to and emulated the clerical ritual of the monastic and other churches. Several of the songs incorporate invocations of holy protection for the members of the confraternity, including the following praise for the Virgin Mary:

Now may our sweet mother
Be forever praised.
She is our advocate
Before our father, God.
Every sinner who turns
To her will find forgiveness.
Now let us all pray
For the sake of this company.⁷⁰

The songs convey an imaginative empathy with the Virgin Mary which is marked by Franciscan feeling and is characteristic of an increasingly widespread current of interactive lay devotion in the Italian peninsula from *ca.* 1300 to *ca.* 1500. Another of these Genoese *laudi* begins with a call to identify with Mary as she stands beneath the Cross:

Come to the cross
To see my love,
And weep aloud
With my great grief.
Come to the cross
And give your attention

69 The two manuscripts are housed in the civic archive of Pietra Ligure and the Biblioteca Civica Berio in Genoa, respectively; Crescini/Belletti, "Laudi genovesi"; Accame, "Frammenti."

70 Crescini/Belletti, "Laudi genovesi," no. 14, 339.

And you will see how
 My innocent son hangs there.
 O pious soul
 Who devoutly love him,
 Weep with me as I grieve
 For his passion.⁷¹

This *laude* proceeds to grieve in turn over each part of the wounded body of Christ. The songs of the confraternities bring us close to the collective devotional life of the laity of the Genoese Republic.⁷²

The fifteenth century witnessed a new measure of practical specialism in the work of the Genoese fraternities, which added to their traditional focus on penitence and prayer an increased concern with specific social needs. An outstanding case in point is the Compagnia della Misericordia, which was created out of an older confraternity of Saint Ambrose in 1455. The new foundation, which in its first phase was known as the "Society of Justice," was widely publicized, and received the formal support of all other guilds in the city. Like medieval confraternities in general, the society was an organization of laypeople, which hired its own clergy to provide the necessary sacraments. The statutes of the new company, in Genoese dialect, survive in a late fifteenth-century manuscript.⁷³ An underlying principle in this case was that, in order to maintain anonymity, members kept their identities secret by wearing all-enveloping robes and hoods. Many of the ordinances relate to the qualities of humility and compassion which were needed in the confraternity members. The principal work of the Compagnia della Misericordia was to prepare condemned criminals for execution. On the eve of the event, two of the brothers would visit the prison, armed with discourses on such subjects as family and the fear of death which were likely to be in the prisoner's mind. Then and on the way to the scaffold on the next day, the brothers would hold in the condemned man's sight a crucifix and a *tavoletta* (board) with an inspiring image of Christian martyrdom, to help to give him courage at the last.⁷⁴

Another instance of the socially engaged, late-medieval confraternal movement in Genoa is the Order of Divine Love, which grew from the initiative of a pious notary, Ettore Vernazza (d. 1524), on the inspiration of his spiritual guide,

71 Crescini/Belletti, "Laudi genovesi," no. 17, 342.

72 Crescini/Belletti, "Laudi genovesi"; Accame, "Frammenti"; Cambiaso, *L'anno ecclesiastico*, 47.

73 Spina, "Confortatorio." The manuscript, in the Biblioteca Universitaria di Genova, has been transcribed in a typescript by Elisabetta Spina, also held by the Biblioteca Universitaria.

74 Spina, "Confortatorio"; Fabbri, "L'opera."

Caterina Fieschi (1447–1510). Caterina had redeemed a disastrous marriage to the spendthrift Giuliano Adorno (into which she entered at the age of sixteen) by devoting both their lives to the help of the poor and sick of Genoa.⁷⁵ Around this charismatic member of a great Genoese family there congregated a group of fellow workers, amongst whom was Vernazza. Encouraged by Caterina, Ettore Vernazza in 1500 founded in the city a hospital for incurables.⁷⁶ He was also the instigator of the Order of Divine Love. This was described as a “confraternity”; in fact, the movement generated a number of derivative confraternities in Genoa, each with a specific charitable function, and also in Rome and Naples. The late fifteenth-century statutes declared: “this fraternity is instituted for no other reason than to plant in our hearts divine love, that is, charity.”⁷⁷

Both individuals were also closely involved in the development of the great Genoese hospital of the Pammatone.⁷⁸ This had been founded in the 1420s by another lawyer, Bartolomeo Bosco, on the edge of the city at Acquasola. Many of those who contributed to this project were of humble background. They included a poor widow, Benedetta Galasso, who was herself cured in the women’s section of the hospital and who donated her house, and a weaver, Lazaro Ser Allegreti di Venezia, who offered a modest sum to do something “useful and profitable to the said hospital.” The staff of the Pammatone (of which the statutes are extant from 1442) lived in common and owned nothing personally: although not professed, they resembled a monastic community. They took turns to provide nursing throughout the day and night in the respective sections for male and female patients. They ate in common, in silence, while they listened to spiritual readings. Doctors were hired in as necessary to heal the inmates, who were very diverse. By the end of the century the Pammatone had, with the assistance of the Genoese senate, drawn together miscellaneous charities to centralize these in what had become the principal civic hospital. With governmental and papal support, between 1490 and 1520 it was rebuilt on a larger scale. Yet it continued to depend entirely on the voluntary commitment of lay men and women inspired, above all, by the example of Caterina, who lived and worked there for over three decades.⁷⁹

75 Cervetto, *Santa Caterina*. Caterina Fieschi was canonized in 1737. See also discussion in chap. 13, p. 390.

76 Carpaneto da Langasco, *Ettore Vernazza and Pammatone*.

77 Carpaneto da Langasco, *Pammatone*, 405–21, for the statutes; *IELM*, 389.

78 See related discussions in chaps. 11, pp. 333–4, and 13, pp. 389–90.

79 Macchiavello, “Sintomi di crisi,” 259–60; *IELM*, 387–9.

Caterina combined, to an unusual degree, the Christian ideals of visionary meditation and practical support for others. But although she was a person of exceptional charisma, she led a life which was not wholly untypical of the late medieval Genoese church. Her sources of inspiration and models of behavior were shared by others in the city, at all social levels. As a girl, Caterina was captivated by the poems and songs of the thirteenth-century Franciscan Jacopone da Todi, which she learned by heart; and by devotional images, such as the scenes of Christ's Passion with which, in her later life, she decorated her room in the Pammatone. The circle of supporters whom she gathered around her resembled the many confraternities of the city, which also combined a practice of penitential devotion with various forms of social assistance. That Caterina's example, in its turn, was a contribution to the spiritual life of the city, no less than to the practice of welfare, is proved by the case of another member of her family, Tommasina Fieschi. Tommasina was first a "companion" of the holy woman (whose memorials she would edit) and subsequently became a nun at the recently reformed, Observant Dominican house of San Giacomo and San Filippo; but she continued to maintain an "apostolate of the grate," communicating at the nunnery door with the many Genoese who sought her advice and guidance. Through her writings and also as an artist, Tommasina endeavored to communicate to others her spiritual experiences.⁸⁰ These were exceptional lives that were, at the same time, profoundly in communication with the larger population of late medieval Genoa.

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80 Mostaccio, *Osservanza*; Fontana, "Tommasina Fieschi."

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The Religious Orders

Valeria Polonio

It is difficult to characterize the scholarship on religious orders in medieval Genoa because literature on this topic often veers into the broader and more general field of ecclesiastical history. Nonetheless, we can say that scholars began to turn their attention to the subject from a very early date. As early as the sixteenth century, historical research in Europe was being affected by controversies prompted by the Reform movements—which, as is widely known, had historiographical overtones—and Ligurian intellectual circles quickly became aware of these trends. To mention only the best-known publications: the works of Cesare Baronio, whose *Annales ecclesiastici* (*Ecclesiastical Annals*) were reprinted between 1588 and 1607, became known in Genoa soon after publication, along with the works of Claude Fleury and Louis-Sébastien Tillemont, also exemplary works in this field, about a century later.

Inspired by these models, the work of a number of gifted antiquarians (both religious and lay) stimulated a keen interest in Genoese history. Among the most important seventeenth-century scholars were Agostino Schiaffino and Agostino Calcagnino, while for the eighteenth century we should mention Nicolò Domenico Muzio, Nicolò Perasso, Giacomo Giscardi, Domenico Piaggio, Francesco Maria Accinelli, and Pietro Paganetti.¹ Their studies were defined by a painstaking search for sources (which they often transcribed in their entirety), and were conducted with a critical spirit as well as attention to authenticity and different genres of documents. Their studies often concerned ecclesiastical history in general, but they did not neglect the contribution of the regular orders. Only some of this research had the good fortune to be printed, but their manuscripts—of which there were often multiple copies—enjoyed a wide circulation and remain useful and interesting to this day.

These two centuries of scholarship bore no immediate fruit, and the study of these issues was resumed only in 1838 by Giovanni Battista Semeria. In 1843 a new study by Semeria attempted to provide a historical and ecclesiastical survey of all Liguria from its origins to the present day; while the overall concept of the work is interesting, it relies almost entirely on published

1 E.g., Schiaffino, *Annali ecclesiastici*; Calcagnino, *Historia*; Perasso, *Memorie e notizie*.

sources, and is weakened by an approach one could call encomiastic or even apologetic.²

A vigorous renewal of studies was then triggered by the activity of the Società Ligure di Storia Patria, which was established in 1857. Members of this scholarly association were particularly interested in the Middle Ages, which had been a glorious period in Genoese history. Their ecclesiastical focus was fundamental given the nature of the period; moreover, the sources they used (which were often unedited) were frequently ecclesiastical in nature. While the more important studies examined the Genoese institutional church, scholars also produced studies of single regular foundations. These studies, the outcome of the dynamic environment of the Società Ligure, were published within and also outside the Società's publications. The constant search for new sources was certainly important, and consistent with the positivist approach prevalent at the time, but it may have been limiting compared to a more complete historiographical approach.

The impact of the Società Ligure di Storia Patria during the second half of the nineteenth century can be explained by both the receptiveness of its members to European intellectual currents and the relatively modest and slow establishment of historical studies at the Università di Genova. Thus the fervor that characterized local scholarly historiography was followed by a long period of general stagnation both for reasons intrinsic to the local environment and because of high-level difficulties in defining ecclesiastical history. A few studies in the 1920s and 1930s remained isolated cases, and a real regeneration came only with the 1950s and 1960s. This renewal was triggered by several factors: first, the vitality of medieval studies, which gained traction at the Università di Genova under Giorgio Falco and then Geo Pistarino; second, the definition of ecclesiastical history as a specific field of study, in part thanks to urging by the diocese and especially by Archbishop Giuseppe Siri; third, the reorganization of the old Società, which was now run by the university under the guidance of Franco Borlandi and later Dino Puncuh; and finally, the publication of edited sources and individual studies regarding the religious orders.³

2 Semeria, *Secoli cristiani*.

3 Assereto, "Antecedenti" and Balletto, "Storia medievale"; also Polonio, "Storia ecclesiastica (I)" and Filangieri, "Storia ecclesiastica (II)."

The Most Ancient Monasteries

The coastline of Liguria is not the natural environment for the great monasteries of the early Middle Ages, which were characterized by extensive landed possessions. For the earliest datable periods, the few extant documents enable us to detect the existence of only two and perhaps three monasteries originally built in these areas, all external to the urban framework in both location and foundation. These were Santi Pietro, Lorenzo, e Colombano di Brugnato, in the Levante; Santa Maria e San Martino della Gallinaria, in the Ponente; and in the same area we can perhaps add San Pietro di Varatella, whose foundation date is uncertain. Within Genoa, the first attestation of a monastery dates from the ninth century, and refers to a dependency of the abbey of San Colombano at Bobbio. Having settled in the Ligurian and Emilian Apennines, these monks held the church of San Pietro along the coast outside of Genoa as well as land in various parts of the Levante. Probably other important monasteries located on the other side of the Apennines were also influential.

The earliest signs of autonomous monasticism in relation to Genoa appear during the second half of the tenth century. The first reference to the monastery of Santo Stefano, situated in the immediate eastern suburb “near the city of Genoa” and “not far from the city wall,” dates from 965.⁴ The community, which was supported by various benefactors—most of them from the class of judges and jurists responsible for civic administration and the gradual formation of the medieval communes—was also connected to episcopal authority; some of its benefactors also came from a seigneurial background.⁵ The first reference to the abbey of San Fruttuoso di Capodimonte (fig. 68), built in an isolated and wild cleft in the promontory of Portofino east of Genoa, dates from not much later. Here the relics of the titular saint had been deposited years earlier after having been brought from Tarragona. While the relics may refer to some form of eremitic life, the monastery was separated from the city only by geography: its first appearance occurs in connection to the Genoese bishopric, and its ties with urban society are always visible.

These foundations were the beginning of an enthusiastic monastic policy pursued by Genoa's bishops, part of a plan for reform made necessary by the Saracen sack of the city in 934–5.⁶ They were also inspired by the program of ecclesiastical reorganization and consolidation imposed by the Ottonians

4 *Prope civitate Ianua ... non longe a muro civitatis*: CDSS 1, docs. 1–2, on 3 and 5. See chap. 1, pp. 30–33, on the documentary evidence.

5 See the discussions of this point in chaps. 3, pp. 76–80, and 7, pp. 168–70.

6 Cf. chap. 3, pp. 85–7.

through clerics of good education and sound morals. In 1007 a new bishop made the singularly important move of formally founding a Benedictine community in San Siro and establishing an endowment for it. The church in question, located outside the western city wall, had until shortly before been the bishop's primary seat; this had now been moved inside the walls to the church of San Lorenzo. New institutions were founded in the years that followed. Among these we should mention the monastery of Sant'Andrea on the islet of Gabbia (the islet no longer exists but it was just off the coast between Cornigliano and Sestri Ponente; the monastery was moved to the nearby mainland in the second half of the twelfth century). While the first reference to Sant'Andrea probably dates from 1009, by 1100 it was already an established and important institution. All were under the protection and control of the bishopric: being Benedictines, the monks could choose their abbots freely, but they were still subject to the bishop. They expressed their submission concretely by delivering a *censum* (tribute) to the bishop's residence each year at Christmas and Easter.

Such substantial and long-term initiatives were the outcome of well-defined projects that went well beyond contemplative matters, according to the ingrained tendency in western Christendom to mingle the spiritual and material spheres. What did bishops require of monks? They were expected to fulfill a wide spectrum of tasks. Obvious are constant prayer interwoven with praises and hymns, and assiduous meditation. The desired results were a model of exemplary conduct and benefits for both laity (kings and emperors, to whom the heads of the local church were tied by strong bonds of loyalty) and clergy (bishops past, present and future, with a sense of continuity that strengthened the monks' work). At a more concrete level, there were other expectations. Bishops required their assistance in different areas, for example, in the management of ecclesiastical institutions in need of assiduous attention and restoration, as in the case of the church of San Vittore e Santa Savina, which had been "destroyed long ago by infidel Saracens."⁷ In the background, there were also more quotidian expectations: good management and economic returns from the lands that were customarily entrusted to monastic communities.

At the same time, we see evidence of the organization of another group that assisted the bishops. Those who during the tenth century were "cardinal" clerics—important figures in the church hierarchy who were particularly close to the bishop—became canons of the cathedral chapter, and were probably organized in a community. Besides working with and for the bishop on administrative tasks and pastoral care, they were also assigned unusual and difficult

7 ... *a perfidis Sarracenis longetis temporibus devastata*: CSS 15–16; for the reference, 29.

tasks such as the spiritual and temporal reorganization of distant areas of the Ponente which had been “left uninhabited, devastated and depopulated by pagan Saracens.”⁸

As noted earlier regarding Santo Stefano, the secular world played its part in these important developments. At the end of the tenth century, the empress Adelaide’s great generosity toward San Fruttuoso serves as a remarkable major expression of the parallel goals (secular and spiritual) that were already evident in the bishop’s initiatives: the Ottonian character of the architecture and decorative sculpture of certain monastic buildings in the vicinity of Genoa suggests profound influence at a cultural level as well. Local society—members of vicecomital families and those entrusted with urban administration, both men and women—actively supported the monks, at times with some suspicion towards the bishop, who was perceived as intrusive. This was tied to the early, first phase of self-assertion that the local community was undergoing, given the formal recognition of customary rights and exemptions granted by Kings Berengar II and Adalbert to “the inhabitants of the city of Genoa” in 958.⁹

Women’s monasteries also existed: the earliest evidence for these dates from 969, in the orbit of Santo Stefano—this was not yet an actual monastery but a religious aspiration reliant on the spirituality of the male center, in which women probably lived communally while remaining in their own homes. Around the mid-eleventh century, we encounter a dynamic abbess; while only a fleeting reference, it is enough to demonstrate the now-solid existence of a women’s community despite our ignorance even of its dedication. The titular saints of Sant’Andrea della Porta (fig. 6) and San Tommaso, however, are clear: both were female communities which in 1100–01 and 1134 respectively appear already mature and fully active, as if born out of nothing. The problem of their origins has been addressed repeatedly, with a number of very different theories advanced. Furthermore, at San Tommaso, extensive remains have been found of a cloister dating between the tenth and eleventh centuries—a series of elegant bell-shaped capitals which attest the life of a wealthy and refined community. Although this architectural source of touching beauty is not definite proof of the existence of female monastic life, it is nonetheless a good indicator.¹⁰

The available historical references and numerous parallels between women’s and men’s monastic communities allow us to surmise that both arose from

8 *A paganis Sarracenis ... vastate et depopulate et sine habitatore relictæ*: *LPE*, n. 8, p. 22; *IELM*, 118–19.

9 Polonio, “Monaci e organizzazione vescovile,” 191–206. On this formative moment in Genoese history, see the discussions in chaps. 3, pp. 74–6, and 4, pp. 95–6.

10 Polonio, “Monachesimo femminile,” 99–106.

the same circumstances, with some differences in date. These parallels—for example, their isolation from external networks, management of their resources, place in local society, and age—are still visible later on, and suggest roots planted in common ground. The overall picture that emerges depicts a unique equilibrium between the urban environment (including both the city itself, which was still quite small, and the surrounding territory over which it exerted its influence and ambitions) and these monastic centers. Wedged between the mountains on the north and the sea on the south, Genoa was connected to the most important land routes on its western and eastern sides. The four monasteries mentioned above were located symmetrically in pairs—one each for men and women on each side—outside the walls but not far from the city. Further off, the two abbeys of San Fruttuoso and Sant'Andrea rose in solitude to the east and west respectively. It is difficult to believe that this elegant symmetry was accidental. Guided by the bishop and supported by a complex society that recognized their place in the urban network, these monasteries imbued the city with sacrality and encouraged the continuation of external relationships that were already present in the eleventh century.

These monasteries long remained the chief examples of Genoese monastic life. Their lands were scattered around the city, in the well-irrigated and easily-reached valleys of the Polcevera and Bisagno, and along the coast. Their produce was probably sold in the urban market, thereby fostering its growth. Less obvious but extremely interesting are their more distant holdings, which gradually expanded into different regions according to consistent patterns. The chief centers were often clustered around a church; this was sometimes received as a gift, but others were established by the monks and nuns themselves, and they were always governed by them. These centers were more common in places of particular political and economic interest to the Genoese, and the deep roots they cultivated established ties with the local population. The most important areas were along the Rivas, both Ponente and Levante; beyond the Apennine ridge in strategic positions for communication between the coast and the Po valley; and on the islands of Corsica and Sardinia, both crucial for control of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

In short, between 1063 and 1157 San Siro acquired three churches in southern Piedmont in the environs of Asti (in Calosso and Canelli), the basilica of San Nicolò in Capriata d'Orba, and the chapels of San Giorgio di Marengo and San Giovanni di Tortona. Santo Stefano, by contrast, chose to settle only in the Ponente. In 1028, the monastery already held lands in the area of Villaregia (today Santo Stefano al Mare, between Imperia and San Remo); it then received other donations, and shortly afterward a church dedicated to the monastery's patron saint is attested. Another church with the same dedication was

established in San Remo and administered by a monk by at least 1069. The monastic presence along this section of the coast became more important during the twelfth century with the acquisition of another three churches, one in Noli and two in the territory of Albenga. Beyond the Apennines, the monastery possessed only one dependency (but an important one) in Sezzadio, which was nearer Acqui than the possessions of San Siro in the same area.

Turning our attention to San Fruttuoso di Capodimonte (fig. 68), we see a very similar pattern: during the twelfth century much of the Levante—the promontory of Portofino, the valley of Fontanabuona (which afforded entrance to the Scrivia valley), the area of Castiglione Chiavarese on the road to the Cento Croci Pass towards the Taro valley, the areas of Lavagna and Sestri—was cluttered with places of worship administered by the monastery. Three other dependencies were located on the other side of the Apennines, in Castelletto d'Orba, and during the following century another appeared in the area of Marcarolo, along an important road connecting the coast to the interior. In the second half of the thirteenth century, a number of churches in Sardinia were added due to closer relationships between San Fruttuoso and the Doria family (figs. 68–9).¹¹

Even the women's monasteries played their part: in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries San Tommaso managed as many as eight churches. Six formed a complex site near Rapallo, in Gavi (near a key pass leading to different points in the Po valley), in the diocese of Acqui; the other two were on Corsica, in the diocese of Aléria (then subject to the archbishop of Pisa). Sant'Andrea della Porta administered a small dependency in Gavi and another church near Vado, in the environs of Genoa's great rival, Savona.

Their involvement in places that were so distant and spread out allows us a glimpse of the complex activities of these monasteries and their profound ties to the Genoese world. The earliest dependencies of San Siro and Santo Stefano were established when the Genoese government was not yet pursuing a concrete expansionist program. Nonetheless, they attest pre-existing relationships and interests, while later settlements coincided both in geography and timing with the interests of the Genoese commune as it pursued expansion and found itself in need of connections. Even Genoa's maritime expansion involved its oldest monasteries, as the churches governed by the monastery of San Tommaso on Corsica attest. A longstanding bone of contention between Genoa and Pisa, Corsica received attention from religious institutions at the same time as it was subject to Ligurian political influence: even the abbey of San Venerio del Tino on an islet in the western Gulf of La Spezia, which the

11 Polonio, "Monasteri e comuni," 165–7.

pope placed under the archbishop of Genoa in 1133, had long since established numerous dependencies on Corsica.

The monastic sphere thus remains one of the most revealing in the medieval world, in which ecclesiastical and secular, public and private, high spirituality and material attachment all mingled and interacted. The four monasteries closest to the city were involved in all aspects of urban life, and these persisted without appreciable consequences, beyond the upheavals in local society at the end of the eleventh century during the struggle between *regnum* and *sacerdotium*.¹² During the twelfth century, the abbots of the two men's monasteries joined the representatives of Genoa's main churches in the election of the archbishop. This practice persisted until the thirteenth century, when canon law gave the cathedral chapter the exclusive right of election; the abbot of San Siro was the last to stand his ground. At a more practical level, when the original exclusivity of the urban *pieve* (the cathedral parish) was ended, monastic churches became parishes and abbots and abbesses chose their priests. At the same time, the monasteries contributed to the city's expansion during a period of population growth: monastic lands released for construction under moderately-priced long-term leases provided stability to a whole group of recent urban immigrants, most of them artisans.¹³ Finally, monasteries also served as hubs of spiritual and material life in the development of new suburbs, some of them outside the original city walls, without losing their generic purpose as centers of charity; both Santo Stefano and San Tommaso, for example, created hostels to offer shelter and assistance to those in need.

Canons and Reformed Monks

While the pre-existing monastic system maintained its complexity, the ecclesiastical reform that began during the eleventh century added important innovations. In July 1100 a large assembly formally installed a small group of clerics in the ancient church of San Teodoro e San Salvatore. Present were Bishop Airaldo, whose episcopacy marked a period of calm in Genoa's unsettled history; Cardinal Maurizio di Porto, a papal legate; important members of the local church, and laypeople of all social statuses. Both materially and morally, all supported the new community, whose members were to "cohabit and live

12 I.e., the conflict between empire and papacy. On this conflict more generally, see chaps. 4, 5, and 12.

13 On immigration from Liguria into Genoa, see chap. 7, pp. 181–4.

together without division and ownership of property.”¹⁴ This marked the beginning of a new form of communal life, that of the regular canons: priests who lived according to their own rule. Their lifestyle did not differ much from that of monks, but their active vocation put them in close contact with the local population and especially with strangers: chiefly with travelers and pilgrims, but also with those locals who were unable to provide for themselves and failed to integrate into the social fabric.

As a quickly-growing crossroads of maritime and land routes, Genoa was an ideal base for these religious groups. Clerics attached to the cathedral and the main churches scattered throughout the diocese (*pievi*) practiced communal life and hospitality. The real innovation was that of San Teodoro; in time, its ideals received concrete expression in numerous initiatives both adopted from the outside world and also begun by locals. Bishops and laymen welcomed the canons of San Rufo (who originated in France), the canons of Mortara (founded in and spread across Lombardy and Piedmont), and the *Crociferi* (“cross-bearers”); they entrusted these with existing churches and established new ones for them, always with the aim of offering religious sustenance in hostels, and eventually also medical assistance. The Mortariensi eventually acquired nine establishments scattered around the city’s main roads, of which the most important was San Teodoro. The settlement of the Hospitallers at San Giovanni di Prè near the port is comparable: their vast and complex headquarters, with a double church renowned for its artistic significance, testifies even today to the importance of their work. Establishments offering hospitality near ports and roads multiplied in both coastal and inland areas of Liguria.

Other independent charitable foundations were established and supported by the laity—both men and women—in sometimes very small semi-religious communities; these were fragile but important signs of a religiosity of good works based on the love of others, in a form of Christian humanism. Other laypeople—again, men and women, the latter acting with clear autonomy—chose to enter monasteries as *conversi* (lay brothers and sisters). As *conversi* they could be part of a community and enjoy all its spiritual and material advantages it offered; the status also enabled them to lead a lifestyle that was more active than contemplative. But one should not assume that *conversi* were relegated to menial chores: often these were mature but still vigorous individuals with adult children, who had led a far from humble life. There was also no shortage of married couples who mutually agreed to end their life together.

14 *Cohabitare et communiter vivere ... sine aliqua divisione vel proprietate: Cartario genovese*, n. 149, p. 206; Polonio, “Canonici regolari.”

Women found places for themselves at various levels: in 1205 the hospital of the cathedral was managed and represented by *domina* (lady) Alda de Mirta.¹⁵

Another result of the reform of the regular orders concerned monks. During the years of conflict that spanned the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Genoa experienced simultaneously an allegiance to Rome (i.e., the papal party) on a general level, and tendencies leading to the birth of the commune on a local level. For some time, the introduction of regular canons in San Teodoro remained an isolated case, facilitated by the bishop and the presence of a papal legate. Only after several decades—and again, thanks to a particular bishop, Otto (1117–20), who had previously been abbot of Saint-Victor in Marseille—did Liguria welcome the form of monasticism generated by the reform.¹⁶

In 1121, however, a group of laymen donated goods to support a new monastery (or perhaps the reform of an older one) based in a pre-existing church. The community was entrusted to San Benigno di Fruttuaria, the mother house of a leading congregation in the reform movement: thus was San Benigno di Capodifaro born. Around 1131 the Benedictine monastery of Sant'Andrea (mentioned earlier) was welcomed into the Cistercian order. Finally, some years later, but probably before 1138, the Vallombrosan house of San Bartolomeo del Fossato was established in Sampierdarena.¹⁷

As can be seen, the developments in monasticism of the first three decades of the twelfth century were generally set in motion by external spiritual impulses and the reorganizational needs of larger organizations. Despite their different forms, there were common and deliberate aspects to these developments. Genoa's three new monasteries were located west of the city, not far from the urban center, in places congenial to contemplative life but close to the main road leading to the Riviera and routes beyond the Apennines. These monasteries were carefully structured at the time of their foundation and fully integrated into the framework of the then-expanding communal city. Numerous key figures supported the new institutions: to cite only one example, the well-known

15 *Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*, docs. 38, 177, 448, 605, 644, 843, 871, 1006, 1047, 1289; *Oberto scriba* (1186), docs. 127, 271, 341; *Oberto scriba* (1190), docs. 104, 140, 182, 277, 299; *Guglielmo Cassinese* (1190–92), docs. 397, 621, 851, 1081, 1784, 1874, 1545, 1784, 1878; *Guglielmo da Sori* (1191, 1195, 1200–1202), docs. 108, 844, and *passim*; *Bonvillano* (1198), docs. 121, 148, 163, 164; *Giovanni di Guiberto* (1200–11), docs. 1116, 1156 (Alda de Mirta), 1526, 1884, 1937; *Stefano di Corrado* (1272–3, 1296–1300), docs. 122, 123; ASG, MS 102, fols. 13r, 61r, 67v, 107f, 122v, 241v; ASG, *Notai antichi*, cart. 18.1, fol. 108r; cart. 18.2, fol. 109v; cart. 103, fol. 71v. These are only a few examples.

16 Cf. chap. 12, pp. 346–7.

17 Rovere, *Carte di San Benigno*, x; Polonio, “Diventare cistercensi”; Salvestrini, *I Vallombrosani*, 51–159.

annalist and political figure Caffaro showed much attention to San Benigno and Sant'Andrea.¹⁸ The new communities met the ethical and spiritual needs of a demanding and informed lay population (Genoa maintained contact with both Rome and the reformed regular movements); also, they were capable of developing the long-distance networks previously discussed by means of dependent churches.

The monks of Fruttuaria had been present in western Liguria since the eleventh century; they also held possessions in Corsica, among which was a monastery. Corsica therefore makes another appearance: during the twelfth century the new Genoese monastery of San Benigno acquired a vast patrimony there, focused around four places of worship. The most important, the priory of San Giacomo in Bonifacio, was already fully operative when it is first attested in 1207, a few years after the establishment of the Genoese on the island's southernmost tip. Bonifacio has been described as "Genoa's maritime sentinel, without which the city could not be safe to pursue its maritime activities," and the dependency of Capodifaro was a substantial and conscientious part of that community.¹⁹ The Vallombrosan San Bartolomeo del Fossato also established an endowment in Corsica that included six churches, three of them baptismal.

Sant'Andrea di Borzone, which took root much later, is interesting for its position in the eastern part of the diocese, in the inland region of Chiavari and Lavagna. In 1184 Archbishop Ugo entrusted the recently-founded monastery to Clermont's congregation of the *Casa Dei* ("House of God"). Its distance from Genoa should not mislead us: a few years earlier, the Genoese had finished building the "castle" of Chiavari, a fortress that served as a civic stronghold against seignorial Lavagna, an administrative center, and a guard post for important connections with the interior. In short, Sant'Andrea became the focus of religious and economic life in that region, taking on a role played centuries earlier by the abbey of San Colombano at Bobbio. From the late twelfth century, however, the area's main frame of reference—mediated by the fortress of Chiavari and members of the Fieschi *consorteria*—became civic life, both at the relatively modest local level and that of the larger city.²⁰

The Cistercians deserve particular attention. Sant'Andrea di Sestri is an early case, and exceptional for the order's incorporation of a pre-existing community. Santa Croce e Santa Maria di Tiglieto, the first Cistercian monastery outside

18 Caffaro makes numerous appearances in this volume, but is most fully discussed in chap. 11, pp. 323–5.

19 *Occhio marino di Genova, senza il quale la patria genovese non potrebbe essere sicura e perdurare nella sua attività marittima*; AG, 345.

20 Polonio, "Monastero di Borzone."

France, was founded even earlier, around 1120. Located in the diocese of Acqui in the Apennines west of Genoa, in a solitary place far from the city, the monastery was supported by the local seigneurial family; nevertheless, it was well-situated in the network of roads connecting Genoa and Savona, and was therefore able to exert significant influence over life along the coast. The early establishment of these two institutions was favored by complex ecclesiastical and political circumstances beyond the scope of this chapter.²¹ Yet the fact that this type of monasticism fitted the religious and practical expectations of the laity was fundamental. From a spiritual perspective, it emphasized devotion to the human Christ and accordingly to His mother, and it encouraged individual introspection. From a behavioral point of view, Cistercian monasteries were not involved in secular matters; they openly welcomed into their communities individuals of varied social status according to a policy of political neutrality; they were competent at managing lands and pastures and innovative even from an architectural perspective; they served as neutral areas where the struggles that beset the communal world dissolved in a spiritual and material truce of benefit to all. In the end, despite their principle of withdrawal from the secular world and their refusal to provide pastoral care, the Cistercians came to satisfy the laity's spiritual needs in other ways.²²

One further aspect must be mentioned: in Liguria the Cistercians were the first and the most successful at meeting the robust demands of the new female spirituality. The aspirations of women could not be fulfilled by the existing monasteries, which were few in number and based on traditional ideas. They often sought a solution by resorting to semi-religious initiatives, which as previously stated were somewhat unstable, individualistic, and even fragile. When the need for organization and control became pressing at the end of the twelfth century—something also urged by church leaders—the dominant solution that presented itself retained in its initial phases two characteristics typical of spontaneous movements, namely freedom of choice and action. During the thirteenth century twelve Cistercian women's monasteries were established around Genoa or in the more distant countryside, all supported by urban society both economically and as a source of personnel; another six (or possibly seven) were established around the turn of the fourteenth century. Another three monasteries were located near Savona. In Noli, which became the center of a small new diocese in 1239, a community of Franciscan-affiliated nuns was transformed into a Cistercian institution. Further, Marquess Enrico II

21 See the discussion in chap. 12, for example, on the establishment of the Genoese archdiocese in 1133.

22 Polonio, "Cistercensi in Liguria."

del Carretto wanted a Cistercian monastery for the village of Millesimo, the small capital of the mountainous part of his dominion; eventually a women's community was established.

In a few cases seigneurial roots supported the foundation and endowment of these institutions, but urban influences quickly became dominant both in terms of the social environment that supported them and in the origins of their nuns. Nunneries welcomed *conversi* of both sexes, including no shortage of priests who made their profession in the hands of the abbess. They administered hostels (often large ones) and managed houses for the redemption of prostitutes that later became monasteries in which the nuns were called *domina* (lady) despite their tumultuous pasts. It is also possible (although this is only a hypothesis supported by a few clues) that they educated girls who were not destined for monastic life. They maintained ties with the countryside and occupied themselves in animal husbandry. They were connected to the men's communities on which they depended for pastoral care and institutional oversight. Through the thirteenth and into the fourteenth centuries, their presence was fundamental to urban society, and they were held in high esteem by the Genoese.

The rapid flowering of the earliest women's communities (which were certainly Cistercian, as attested by documents) is the first such example in northwestern Italy, to the point that people traveled to Liguria to learn the correct form of religious life. Even the architecture of the Ligurian monasteries was later adopted by similar institutions in southern Piedmont, despite the greater proximity of men's monasteries of the same congregation. What were the reasons for this originality? In all probability it was prompted by contact with northern France and neighboring areas, where an intense and liberal women's spirituality produced semi-religious alternatives and these experiences combined with Cistercian monasticism in a fruitful reciprocity. Genoese merchants were already in France in the 1190s, while Genoa welcomed groups from beyond the Alps, including the *Flamenses* (in a broad sense, people from Arras and its surrounding areas, wealthy merchants and artisans). The opportunities offered by this new kind of spirituality caught the attention of the laity, who resolved to put into practice their strong religious fervor—a quality admired by Jacques de Vitry, who visited Genoa in September 1216.²³

23 Petti Balbi, *Negoziare fuori patria*, 11, 19, 21; Dufrasne, *Donne moderne*; Polonio, "Un'età d'oro"; Jacques de Vitry, *Lettres* 1.76–8.

The Mendicant Orders

The dynamic presence of the reformed regular orders—canons and monks—nonetheless left room for other solutions. The Dominicans and the Franciscans arrived in the Genoese suburbs in rapid succession. The Dominicans were quickly integrated into Genoese territory, arriving a few years before the Franciscans whose activities were in many ways analogous. This was probably due to the importance of the coastline for transport and travel, and to the recognized predilection of the two orders—in their earliest years, the Dominicans specifically—for combating the heterodox movements that both the proximity of Liguria to southern France and the longstanding ties between the two areas might favor. According to tradition, the original communities of these orders in Genoa were established by the founders themselves. This myth of origins evokes the early existence of these communities, although they are not attested by the surviving sources due to their relative informality. Naturally Genoa served as a hub, with its wide network of contacts and the orders' enthusiastic reception by local society driving their dissemination across the region.

Very likely the Dominican settlement in Genoa predates 1222. During that year, the community was formalized under a prior who had already participated in the assembly of the urban clergy, serving as a witness to the act drawn up on that occasion. The community was settled on land outside the walls but close to the city, which had been donated promptly by certain citizens including a member of the Doria family. A place of worship is attested in 1226, and by 1230 the site had earned the right of burial for those who were not members of the Dominican community.²⁴ A church dedicated to Saint Dominic was begun around the mid-thirteenth century in the same area. The building of this large complex (the largest in the city after the cathedral) progressed slowly, partly because as time went by the original project was extended, so that in the fifteenth century parts of the walls and roofs were not yet completed, and the works were finished at public expense. The complex, which is no longer extant, was located in Piazza De Ferrari where the theater and the Palazzo dell'Accademia presently stand.

24 *Liber magistri Salmonis*, docs. 208, 483, 1009 (legacies bequeathed to *ecclesie fratrum predicatorum Ianue et fratrum minorum*, "the church of the friars preacher at Genoa and the friars minor"); *AGC* for 1230, 3:53–4.

By 1226, the Franciscans also had a church. In this year, together with the Dominicans, they received legacies from three wills, one of which also entrusted them with the distribution of pious bequests.²⁵ Probably their first community was built in the area of Guastato (today Piazza della Nunziata, at the time a rural area) and was made up of relatively flimsy and humble structures in accordance with the original spirit of the movement. Shortly thereafter the community was moved to the foot of the hill of Castelletto, outside the walls but closer to the city. There towards the mid-thirteenth century construction began on a church that would achieve great prominence. Even this church, however, no longer exists: its size was gradually reduced during the building of the palaces in via Garibaldi and it was eventually integrated into another building. The garden behind Palazzo Bianco now encompasses some of its remains.

These initial choices show that like other regular orders, the followers of Saints Dominic and Francis in their purest devotional essence were divided between hermitage and city, between the desire for prayer and contemplation and the call to preach and serve the needs of a highly original and innovative urban society. At first their settlements outside the city walls were enough to meet these difficult goals, but the friars' success among Genoa's inhabitants ultimately changed the urban fabric considerably, in ways quite different from their initial intent. The two largest mendicant institutions were poles of attraction for the faithful, who were drawn in great numbers by the liturgies and sermons of famous preachers specially invited from outside Genoa. Gradually they became new focal points in the life of the ever-growing city.²⁶

Meanwhile, both communities gained standing in local society. For example, in 1229 representatives of both communities—together with the archbishop and a papal legate—were publicly consulted on a question of morality, which although subtle had important political implications for the city at large. In following years the friars were involved in other important public events of general interest and emotional weight. In 1230 the friars joined a large number of women of varying status—a multitude of *dominarum et mulierum* (ladies and other women)—to stop or at least delay a number of executions. Later, brothers of both orders acted as mediators in the city's factional conflicts, *signum crucis portantes et misericorditer postulantes* (bearing the sign of the cross and pleading for mercy). The Dominicans in particular were favored as diplomatic representatives in difficult missions to foreign powers, and in certain cases they were appointed by both parties to the negotiations.²⁷

25 *Liber magistri Salmonis*, docs. 1009, 1093, 1183.

26 Pellegrini, "Itinerari."

27 AGC for 1229–30, 3.45–6, 51, 53–4; and 1241, 3.109; for 1251, 4.4; for 1284, 5.58, and 1293, 5.168.

These events unfolded in tandem with the general history of the two main mendicant orders, which owed their success chiefly to papal support. In 1240 Pope Gregory IX expressed his respect for the friars in recommending that the Genoese consult them along with the archbishop and several other prelates on important issues then under discussion in the city. As elsewhere, the Dominican presence in Liguria was reinforced by the order's role in overseeing doctrine; sometimes they collaborated with the secular arm in such matters, but at other times they found themselves at odds with civil authorities concerned with maintaining their own autonomy.²⁸ The inevitable controversies with the ordinary clergy were resolved amicably in 1281 without charges or the unseemliness of a formal trial. Fueled by rivalries regarding pastoral care, especially burials, these disagreements and their subsequent resolution shed unusual light on the monks' attention to funerary rituals, which the laity obviously valued.²⁹

The participation of women was promoted by members of prominent families, supported by an otherwise unknown "many others" in the case of the Franciscan sisters (the Poor Clares) and "a multitude of faithful" for the Dominican nuns. This led to the creation of the convents of Santa Caterina di Luccoli (Franciscan-affiliated) in 1228 and Santi Giacomo e Filippo (Dominican) in 1268, although both institutions were received with a certain wariness by the archbishops of the time, who were naturally protective of the rights of the diocese and its churches.³⁰

The two new religious orders developed along lines consistent with their general principles. The Franciscans quickly found other sites congenial to their contemplative ideals, and simultaneously settled in smaller towns, especially if these were developing and therefore presented new social conditions in need of better religious support. They established themselves in the village of Sestri, west of the city where the coast was being settled, and at the intersection of the roads from the Riviera and the inland Oltregiogo. Their foundation date, which is traditionally given as 1229, remains uncertain, but it is undeniable that the Franciscan presence—which was characterized by voluntary poverty, associated with the construction of churches, and valued by the laity (both men and women of diverse social standings)—spread rapidly. During the last decades of the thirteenth century, the brothers expanded their presence on either side of the city in an interestingly symmetrical pattern: they established a community

28 Auvray et al., *Registres de Grégoire IX*, doc. 5918; *AGC* for 1253, 4.10–11, and 1256, 4.23.

29 *LPE*, docs. 183–4.

30 *RC2*, doc. 298; *LPE*, doc. 156.

west of Genoa in the Val Polcevera—at Chiappetta, near Bolzaneto—and another, San Giuliano, along the coast east of the city at Albarno.

The daily life and operations of the mendicant orders cannot be fully understood if considered only within the city limits, however. The importance of their networks becomes clearer if we consider briefly how each expanded throughout the region. During the thirteenth century Franciscan houses flourished at the edges of the main towns along the entire arc of the coast. Probably as early as 1236 the friars were already present outside the walls of Savona. In the same years their presence is attested near Sarzana, and in 1244 a settlement outside the walls of Albenga is mentioned. They are also attested in Chiavari, where they consecrated a church in 1258 and established a women's community. Also in 1258, they were managing a cult site outside the walls of Ventimiglia at which many laypeople were asking to be buried although the building was not yet finished. In 1291 Nicholas IV granted indulgences to the Franciscan church at Noli.³¹ The fact that requests for burial were frequent everywhere is the first sign that the friars had managed to integrate their communities into the existing system of pastoral care; this was characteristic of their order and, as mentioned earlier, in many cases significantly influenced the development of urban space.

The Dominicans also asserted their presence in Liguria according to a trajectory dictated by pressing cultural needs. Their Genoese convent grew rapidly: according to the order's internal system, it first acquired the status of "school of humanities" and later, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, it became a *studium generale* (a university for members of the order). This combined with the custom of moving students and friars around made the convent into a cultural melting pot and a crossroads for scholars whose influence is visible in the city, including in the field of art.³² During the thirteenth century numerous figures known for the originality and enduring influence of their works lived at San Domenico in Genoa. Among these, at least two important scholars should be mentioned: first, Giovanni Balbi, who among other works wrote the *Catholicon*, a treatise on the *trivium* with a glossary that proved fundamental for medieval lexicography. The *Catholicon* enjoyed a wide circulation throughout Europe: it was published in Mainz as early as 1460 and existed in twelve editions by 1500. Secondly, Jacopo da Varagine was twice prior of the Dominican province of Lombardy and archbishop of Genoa from 1292 until

31 Polonio, "Nome di Francesco," 142–3.

32 Hinnebusch, *History of the Dominican Order*, 2.23, 46. Cf. the related discussion in chap. 11, pp. 384–5.

his death in 1298; he wrote several collections of sermons, historical works, and above all the famous *Legenda aurea* (*Golden Legend*), a hagiographical best-seller that dominated the field of iconography for centuries.³³

The Dominicans' relative elitism mean that their order grew slowly and remained thinly spread in other areas of Liguria. By nature demanding when it came to education—the Dominicans never established a convent without a school—their communities were few but profoundly influential over a broad geographical area. Despite the early establishment of the community in Genoa, it was a long time before another community was founded elsewhere in Liguria—specifically, in Albenga, where the Dominicans settled probably sometime before 1287. Savona followed a few years later: its church was founded in 1306, but it complemented a community established shortly before that. The Dominican community established in Sarzana around the same time was headed by a prior and about to start building a church in 1301.³⁴ The order's particular interest in cities is immediately evident, since these were most receptive to the religious message with a strong didactic foundation that these friars offered, and could provide the manpower needed by the order. Thus in western Liguria the Dominicans chose the two chief cities, the first of which was Albenga, seat of a vast and ancient bishopric; to the east they chose Sarzana, a town situated in a key network of roads that was growing rapidly, and which from an ecclesiastical perspective was the heir of Luni, an ancient city then in decline.

Within the vibrant framework of thirteenth-century Genoese religious life, other organizations also found their own space: the Humiliati, for example, who were also receptive to women and collaboration with the laity, and especially the Augustinians. As is well-known, in 1256 Alexander IV ordered the reorganization of the various eremitic groups generically inclined towards the rule of Saint Augustine. In Genoa, Alexander's decree attracted one of these groups, which after some initial difficulties settled in a sparsely-populated area on the hill of Sarzano. Their convent of Sant'Agostino (which eventually grew to remarkable dimensions) and its church (which has an interesting belfry decorated with tiles) became a spiritual center as well as a focal point of local civic life.

33 Pratesi, "Balbi, Giovanni." On Jacopo da Varagine, see chaps. 8, pp. 198–9, and 11, pp. 327–8; also *JVC*, *LA*, *GL*.

34 Polonio, "Domenicani nel medioevo albenganese."

One might have noticed, however, that women were not allotted much space in the framework of the mendicant orders. Their presence was certainly limited when compared to the quality and intensity of women's participation in other milieux. Even the third orders—organizations reserved for the laity under the guidance and spiritual direction of the friars—developed slowly. It is possible that in the thirteenth century the Cistercians and various semi-religious groups were already fulfilling the aspirations of most of the laity, particularly women.

Crisis and Development: The Observants

The currents of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which oscillated between exuberant spontaneity and planned institutional development, established a good long-term pattern. But concrete initiatives were forced to confront the general economic crisis that spanned most of the fourteenth century, which in Liguria was further intensified by recurrent political upheavals and military devastation. Systems of charity were certainly affected by the dire economic situation, but they found new outlets thanks to an increased sensitivity in identifying the needs of a changing society, and they received unstinting support from the laity.

The situation was quite different for regular canons and monks. Both groups had to face not only the general economic problems but also their own challenges, since they were tied to systems of land ownership and management which were inefficient and obsolete. At the same time, costs for the maintenance of aging buildings and their obligations as providers of hospitality soared, and like everyone they were affected by the demographic collapse caused by the great plague epidemic of 1347–52. Women's monasteries lost their initial attraction, and the recruitment of nuns became the prerogative of the most prominent families, who could afford dowries. As the decades passed, the urban monasteries, or many of them, began to be perceived as lax by the population.

An expression commonly used of the history of western monasticism in the fourteenth century defines it as "the century of the great crisis." While true, this concept must be nuanced: the ideals of monasticism did not undergo a crisis, and interest in the contemplative life—far from declining—experienced a renewal. Rather, people examined the origins of monasticism and what was perceived as the purest expression of its ideals. As in earlier centuries, the eremitic life, whether pursued individually or communally, also received renewed interest.

One group of laymen dedicated to a solitary and austere life of prayer settled on the mount of Portofino, which by its very nature was suited to contemplative life. While these laymen were not part of an organized order they were nonetheless under the aegis of church institutions. Among these was the Carthusian house of San Bartolomeo, located west of Genoa in the area currently known as Rivarolo and active from the end of the thirteenth century.

In the fourteenth century the possibilities inspired by these ideals were supported by Archbishop Guido Sette (1358–67), a figure of great religious and cultural learning (a scholarly colleague of Petrarch, with whom he remained lifelong friends), and a devoted pastor to both clergy and laity. He was the chief sponsor of a new men's monastery built on the slope of a mountain called Cervara, between present-day Santa Margherita and Portofino. It is a place of radiant beauty tucked between the sea and olive groves, but at the time it was so isolated that the Carthusians had considered—and rejected—it for settlement. On 26 August 1361 the first stone of the church of San Girolamo della Cervara was laid on behalf of an already-active men's community. The rule of Saint Benedict was the keystone of this community's spirituality and internal organization, with a few additions derived from experience (in particular, the position of abbot was not a life appointment but term-limited). Further, its dedication to Saint Jerome suggests that the community pursued a penitential piety, highly internalized and linked to eremitic practice. The reputation of this new monastery spread beyond Liguria: it welcomed brethren from different places; it was the recipient of two letters from Catherine of Siena; and in the fifteenth century it gradually established a small congregation incorporating a few ancient and neglected monasteries in Liguria, southern Piedmont, Lombardy and Emilia, with the goal of reviving them.³⁵

Also part of this monastic renewal were initiatives more focused on the urban environment which were encouraged by and intended for women. Of note among these were a community for former prostitutes supported by the abbey of Santo Stefano, and Santa Margherita della Rocchetta, a monastery characterized by strictly contemplative practices and also patronized by Archbishop Guido.³⁶

The general problems of the fourteenth century were felt by all the established religious orders. The Franciscans were especially affected, being afflicted by internal strife that foreshadowed schism and conflict with the papacy. And indeed, it is precisely in the Franciscan milieu that just after mid-century

35 Polonio, "Vivace vicenda religiosa," 74–84.

36 ASG, Archivio segreto, S. Stefano, *busta* 1512, n. 361 bis; *busta* 1514, n. 410 bis; Perasso, *Memorie e notizie*, MS 843, fol. 60r.

we observe the first signs of spontaneous movement later distinguished by the term “Observant”; this phenomenon later came to involve all the older, more established religious orders, inspiring them to a pure adherence to their original principles, or to those aspects most appreciated by contemporary society. During the fifteenth century, the Observant movement spread in Italy and in Europe: it was welcomed by the laity and especially by the ruling classes, who perceived these orders not only as a solution to the desire for a more correct religious life, but also as a possible instrument of good governance.

Once again, Genoa and Liguria are notable for the speed with which they adopted these innovations. In 1412–15, San Nicolò del Boschetto—west of Genoa in the area today known as Campi-Cornigliano—was the first monastery outside the Veneto to be accepted into the congregation of Santa Giustina in Padua (the Benedictine arm of the Observant movement). In 1417 Bernardino of Siena, the great preacher active in Observant Franciscanism, preached in Genoa; he returned the following year, evidently because he was confident of a warm reception. He may also have made brief stops in areas of the Ponente; in the late 1430s he again visited various places in Liguria.³⁷

The Franciscan Observant movement gained ground rapidly. The convent in Chiavari may have been associated with it from as early as the 1420s. Its most important event was the foundation of a new community not far from Genoa in the Val Bisagno, in a church that had once belonged to the Mortariensi (who by then were defunct). The friars settled there in 1444 after at least six years of complex negotiations. The difficulties they encountered did not derive from the Franciscans, who had already been in the area of Genoa for two centuries. Rather, the obstacle came from the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and was overcome thanks to the support of the papacy and the highest echelons of civic government irrespective of political affiliation: a rare case of concord in a climate of disastrous factionalism.³⁸ Even stronger was the resistance to the Observant Dominicans, especially since they settled inside the city walls in a church, Santa Maria di Castello, that was part of the parish system. In this and in other cases, the demands of the laity were supported by Pope Eugenius IV, who was determined to correct lapses and introduce new ethical principles, saying of himself that: “we ... care less for ancient customs than for saving souls.”³⁹

The attitude of his successor Nicholas V was less rigid, but the general situation remained unchanged. Faced with the decadence of the city’s ancient

37 Polonio, “Albenga e San Bernardino,” 37–9.

38 On the problem of factionalism, see chaps. 4 and 5.

39 *Nos ... non tantum antiquitatem consuetudinis attendimus quantum affectamus animarum salutem: IELM*, 296, 301–9, 319–21.

institutions (Santo Stefano was *in commendam*—temporarily managed by an individual outside the community—and San Siro was hit by scandal) and demands for new strictness, existing Observant institutions worked especially hard to meet the needs of the laity with efficiency and dynamism. Ligurian society relied on these institutions as reference points as it sought solutions to pressing dilemmas both public and private. The Ligurians' world was changing rapidly in the second half of the fifteenth century due to the Ottoman expansion, the resulting contraction of the commercial area in which the Genoese could operate, and the loss of their colonies on the Bosphorus and the Black Sea, despite their initial hopes of negotiation with the sultan. These came on top of their usual problems: a total dependence on imports for the most basic provisions, wars, internal conflicts, and recurring epidemics.⁴⁰ Political failures and straitened circumstances, social hardships, and new economic parameters led to profound moral reflection: one of the most hotly debated issues was the possible usurious undertones of the financial affairs of many Genoese. This local angst combined with a spiritual ferment spreading across Europe, which was inclined to introspective piety and its direct reflection in religious practice. Familiar themes thus took hold in a context of greater material hardship and increased institutional responsiveness. Again, certain new ideas came from the area of Flanders, where the *devotio moderna* (Modern Devotion) originated. In certain respects this movement resembled what was happening in Liguria—and of course Genoa maintained strong bonds, even family ties, with the Low Countries. The proceedings of the *gran Consiglio* (large assembly)—which included the doge, the *Consiglio degli anziani* (elders), a few key magistrates, and 250 eminent citizens—are poignant: its members debated moral issues; they envisioned the dangers to individuals' eternal salvation and the general disrepute brought about by unethical choices; and they sought guarantees.⁴¹ These were requested partly from legal experts and partly from the city's most respected clerics, all of them members of the Observant movement.

One of the most noteworthy was the Franciscan Angelo Carletti da Chivasso, first a novice and later a teacher in the local convent; he was trained in law and open to economic innovation. He was the leading figure behind developments such as the Monte di Pietà, the establishment of which was inspired by his Lenten sermons of 1483. This new institution was tied financially to the recently-founded hospital of Pammatone;⁴² the connection was important for the efficiency of the latter, but also for the social context in which both institutions

40 On the challenges of the fifteenth century, see chaps. 4, pp. 116–18, and 14, pp. 413–17.

41 ASG, Archivio segreto, Diversorum, 581, fols. 83v–86r; MS 141, fols. 2r–5r.

42 Cf. chaps. 11, pp. 333–4, and 12, pp. 363–4.

were developing. Brother Angelo inspired his fellow brethren, who had been transferred from their original convent to a new seat and entrusted with the hospital church. During the last decade of the fifteenth century another austere figure of the same order, Bernardino Tomitano da Feltre, preached with wide resonance in the city: in the doge's words, Bernardino appeared "at times terrible, at times comforting and a gentle healer."⁴³

The spirituality of these and other clerics, and their influence, spread over the large hospital complex and those who dedicated their lives to assisting people in need. Accordingly the hospital became the focus of a small group that gathered around Caterina Fieschi Adorno (Saint Catherine of Genoa, canonized in 1737).⁴⁴ In 1497 this group, and especially the notary Ettore Vernazza, established the prevalently lay confraternity of the *Divino Amore* (Divine Love) under the protection of Saint Jerome. Within the confraternity the religious ideal was lived with intensity and restraint, and was associated with charitable assistance; accordingly, the confraternity was the driving force behind successful initiatives in Liguria and in other places.⁴⁵

Returning to other developments, beginning in the mid-fifteenth century a heightened interest in strict observance is visible. Among the regular canons worked those called *Lateranensi* (of the Lateran). The Observant Carmelites settled on the hill of Promontorio west of the city. On this same side, a group of Hieronymite hermits settled in an isolated area; they eventually founded daughter houses outside Genoa and inspired a lay confraternity. Finally, the early 1490s saw the earliest establishment of the Order of Minims (Observant Franciscans) in the city, in the convent of San Francesco di Paola.⁴⁶

The most original and enduring venture involved the Augustinians. Around 1473 the Genoese Giovanni Battista Poggi created a movement of brothers "who wore their sandals more tightly and their poverty with many more restrictions" than in many other observant orders: known as the *congregazione di Genova* (Genoese congregation) within the varied and complex spectrum of Augustinian Observant orders, they preserved their structure unaltered until 1822.⁴⁷ Their initiative quickly expanded into western Liguria, France, and

43 *Modo terribilis, modo consolator et medicus suavis*; ASG, Archivio segreto, Litterarum, 1810, c. 94v.

44 Cf. chap. 12, pp. 362–4.

45 Polonio, "Ubi karitas," 343–8. See also discussion in chs. 11 and 12.

46 Perasso, *Memorie e notizie*, MS 841, fol. 272r; Schiaffino, *Annali ecclesiastici* vol. 3, fols. 519–20, 726–7, 800; *IELM*, 373–4.

47 ... *che portano gli zoccoli con maggiore strettezza et povertà di molte altre observantie*; *CARG*, fol. 226r; *IELM*, 374.

Piedmont, but the organization's seat was in Genoese suburbs in the church of Nostra Signora della Consolazione (Our Lady of the Consolation), which was situated in the lower Bisagno valley (today, via 20 Settembre).

The case of women has its peculiarities. The numerous female institutions needed reform: this was all the more evident to contemporaries since nuns and mendicant sisters increasingly refused to accept the lifestyle, including seclusion, which was then considered necessary by ecclesiastical authorities and the majority of the laity. The situation was further exacerbated by economic issues connected to the sustenance of so many institutions and by the fact that many of the nuns belonged to illustrious families. The reform of the nuns became an affair of state, which was painstakingly studied and attempted by Genoa's government, prominent families, the papacy and (obviously) women in general. Women were in any case the protagonists of this reform, whether as rebels or as austere reformers. The latter acquired numerous affiliations, including the Lateran canonesses (a very early arrival), Observant Augustinians, Observant Dominicans, and Brigittines. As the fifteenth century advanced, institutions of long standing were gradually closed to make way for new women's religious communities, which became increasingly prominent in the early modern period.⁴⁸

The few signs of contradiction presented here suggest a diverse picture in which—beyond the generic categories of “crisis” and “prosperity”—one can perceive the energy and turmoil of an ongoing process of transformation in which all aspects of society were involved, both public and private. Despite its peculiarities, which at times were fairly extreme, the Genoese case fits a broader pattern. Faced with the relatively weak authority of both the archbishop and the institutional church, new efforts at reform either came from outside the city or arose locally, and were supported by urban society. The Middle Ages closed with an array of proposals and concrete efforts signaling a constructive desire for reform.

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48 Polonio, “Affare di Stato.”

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PART 4

Economy and Empire



The Genoese Economy

Jeffrey Miner and Stefan Stantchev

Genoa was, along with Venice, the premier commercial and naval power of the high and late Middle Ages (1000–1500). The Genoese considered themselves “Lords of the Sea”; to be Genoese meant to be a merchant (map 1). A port of primarily regional significance in the eleventh century, the city was transformed in the twelfth century by an alliance between its elite and the rulers of the various Latin states founded in the wake of the First Crusade. In exchange for shipping and defense, the Genoese received commercial privileges and trade advantages in the crusader states.¹ These privileges made many Genoese wealthy, wealth which the city’s elite poured both into the fabric of the city itself and into fighting for more privileges around the Mediterranean and beyond. In the thirteenth century, the focus of trade shifted increasingly from the Crusader states to Constantinople and the Black Sea. The fourteenth century was a period of confusion, in which internal strife and a weakened economic conjuncture strained the city’s capacity to protect its hegemony in shipping, and gave rise to a series of internal conflicts over the distribution of power and wealth. By the fifteenth century, the city’s elite had stabilized somewhat, and continued to invest in long-distance trade, although in new ways, reflecting broader economic and political changes. Iberia and England rose in importance as the east declined, and long-distance trade increasingly bypassed the port of Genoa altogether as finance came to play an ever greater role in the prosperity of the wealthy.

In the mid-twentieth century, Genoa and its economic fortunes enjoyed high visibility in broader narratives of medieval economic growth and change. This was largely due to the influence of Roberto S. Lopez, an Italian-American scholar of the Middle Ages. Author of a number of specialized works on economic history, Lopez made his greatest contribution with *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages* (1971), a work that cemented Genoa’s role as a key barometer of medieval economic development. *The Commercial Revolution* emphasized native factors in European growth generally and Italian, especially Genoese, commercial techniques in order to reject Sombart’s hypothesis that the Jews, an alien and un-medieval people, were responsible for the invention

¹ Cf. chaps. 17 and 18 of this volume.

of capitalism.² Lopez's insistence, along with that of his American collaborators, that commerce was central to medieval economic growth as a whole, became canonized and incorporated into basic reference works, whence it came to the attention of social scientists in the latter part of the century.³

Several trends converged to make the last third of the twentieth century a highly productive time for studies of Genoa and economic life in both Europe and the United States. In the United States, this was most closely aligned with the "new social history," a move to study non-traditional economic actors (laborers, slaves, and women), particularly though the use of quantitative methods.⁴ Similar trends, though perhaps less explicitly quantitative, were apparent to Genoese scholars as well.⁵ Likewise, the influence of the *Annales* school on French historiography led to the production of a pair of fundamental and massive works on different parts of Genoese history—the fifteenth century and Genoa's colonies in the east.⁶ This scholarship, while continuing to recognize that trade was critical to Genoese economic life, tried to counter-act earlier works that tended to focus exclusively on merchants and trade to the neglect of labor as well as domestic production and consumption.

By the turn of the twenty-first century, the convergence had clearly ended. In the American academy, at least, economic history appears to have mainly moved out of history departments and been taken over by scholars working in economics, political science or sociology.⁷ Nevertheless, there are signs that Genoa's exuberant medieval growth may benefit from renewed interest in culture and commerce in the late Middle Ages.⁸ Research into the Mediterranean as both a cultural and economic zone remains strong, and studies of Genoa continue to emphasize the pan-Mediterranean nature of its medieval existence.⁹ In a different vein, the international financial crisis of the early aughts has renewed attention to patterns of debt and credit, encouraging an already active discussion of Genoese finance, especially around the role and

2 Guglielmotti, "Lopez, Roberto Sabatino"; on Lopez's contributions in a broader context, see Mell, "Jewish Émigrés," 556–87. For a similar contribution, re-envisioning territorial aristocracy as something other than terminally backward, see Heers, *Family Clans*.

3 For example, Lopez, "Trade of Medieval Europe."

4 The best example is probably Epstein, *w&w*, but see also the work of Diane Owen Hughes.

5 Balletto, "Bilancio."

6 Heers, *cxv*, and Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1978).

7 Sewell, "Strange Career," 146–66.

8 For a general account of commerce focused mostly on the Low Countries, see Howell, *Commerce before Capitalism*.

9 Horden/Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*.

nature of the Casa di San Giorgio.¹⁰ Likewise, historians of material culture may well find that Genoa's wealth of notarial sources offer a unique perspective on issues of prices and value in light of the hybrid cultural and economic significance of goods.¹¹ Finally, while historians and social scientists often differ markedly in their training and intellectual preoccupations, the attention paid to Genoa by non-historians presents possibilities for dialogue and building intellectual bridges outside historians' typical circles.

Trade and Economy to 1150

Although it may once have been fashionable to see Genoa as economically invisible in the ninth and tenth centuries—restricted to regional exchange in the Ligurian sea—recent research has demonstrated with certainty that the Genoese were active in trade beyond their nearest communities.¹² Genoa was pressed between rugged mountains and the sea; its region, Liguria, defined by micro-ecologies with poor natural resources.¹³ Yet the prevailing currents and winds made the city's port an excellent one. Although its availability was highly localized, timber was not in short supply.¹⁴ Sea-borne trade was to be the pillar of Genoese prosperity and the means of basic sustenance alike.

Geography was not destiny, however, and the story of Genoa's explosive growth owes less to topographical features than an aggressive "first mover" attitude within a favorable historical conjuncture.¹⁵ Albeit small, the city had its own bishop and merited a thorough sack in 934–5.¹⁶ It seems likely that, in response to this sack, populations concentrated in walled centers and local elites began actively leveraging what agricultural surplus existed in order to protect themselves, raid their enemies, and trade whatever booty could be got by that raiding.¹⁷ Although this activity would eventually result in trade and colonies

10 E.g. Felloni, *Casa di San Giorgio*.

11 Petti Balbi, "Circolazione mercantile," 41–54.

12 Cf. the discussion in chap. 3, pp. 73–4; also McCormick, *Origins*, 636, and *DAL* on the regional economy. For older views, Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne*; Vitale, *Breviario*, 6.

13 *G&G*, 11–22.

14 *G&G*, 10–11. On Mediterranean micro-ecologies, Horden/Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*, especially 53–88.

15 *G&G*, 10–28.

16 Chap. 3, pp. 86–7; also Kedar, "Nuova fonte," 605–16.

17 Vitale, *Breviario*, 8. In a similar vein, Lopez, *Su e giù*, 45.

across the known world, it is essential to remember that none of this would have been possible without at least modest agricultural surpluses at home.¹⁸

Thus maritime military activity around the year 1000 provided the foundation for Genoa's explosive growth over the next two centuries.¹⁹ Like many others, the Genoese traded and consumed typical Mediterranean staples: salt and timber, cheese and wine, grains and olive oil.²⁰ However, growth was based less in commercial activity than in a political and economic system in which the spoils of military conquest always circulated back into more military operations.²¹ Early raids on ports like Mahdia in Tunisia (1087) were little more than plundering expeditions, but Genoese engagement with trade was transformed in the wake of the First Crusade.²² While Genoese ships had rarely visited the east before 1100, the newly established crusader states needed both maritime defense and transport of people and goods between Latin Christendom's core areas and the Holy Land.²³ These the Genoese commune agreed to provide in exchange for legal protections and advantages over other merchants trading with the east. Although these privileges were hedged about with restrictions, the First Crusade affected Genoa's economy in two ways.²⁴ As with previous campaigns, it provided an infusion of wealth that could "serve as seed money for commercial activities."²⁵ Second, in the longer run, it underwrote customs privileges, political support, and a key role facilitating pilgrim and freight transit between the west and the Holy Land.

We may debate whether Genoa's experiences in the Holy Land were a "laboratory" in which the tools of commercial expansion were deliberately forged, or whether Genoa's commercial strategy emerged piecemeal in response to contingent circumstances and accidents. In either case, it is clear that the First Crusade prefigured subsequent Genoese activity throughout the Mediterranean.²⁶ In this key moment, the city government (*compagna comunis*)

18 G&G, 18–9, 25–6.

19 For a fuller discussion of the political and military foundations of Genoese trade, see chaps. 16 and 17.

20 G&G, 27.

21 CASD, 30.

22 Cowdrey, "Mahdia Campaign." On early expeditions: chap. 16, pp. 452–4; on the effect of the First Crusade on Genoese trade with the East: chap. 17, pp. 471–77.

23 CASD, 48–9.

24 Ashtor, "Regno dei crociati,"; Pistarino, "Genova e il vicino Oriente,"; Balard, "Genovesi in Siria-Palestina."

25 CASD, 32–3, and the literature cited therein.

26 Basso, *Insediamenti e commercio*, 26. On the ties between crusade, commerce, and *compagna*, see also chaps. 4, 16, 17, and 18.

lent support to an originally private crusading initiative; private individuals reaped most of the gains; and Genoese expansion was centered on ample customs and extraterritorial privileges. While Genoa's success would have been impossible without favorable geography and some economic surplus, its emergence as a naval and commercial power on a Mediterranean scale was the result of aristocratic bellicosity, opportunism, and fortuitous circumstances.

Genoa and Trade, 1150–1250

Within fifty years of the First Crusade, Genoese commercial interests spanned the Mediterranean, irrespective of any real and/or perceived religious and political boundaries.²⁷ Alexandria, the Holy Land, and Sicily dominate the first extant Genoese commercial documents in the 1150s, followed at considerable distance by Provence, Bugia (Béjaïa), and Constantinople. Ceuta, Tunis, the Spanish coast, Sardinia, and Campania complete the picture.²⁸ For the next century or so, favorable trading conditions and communal privileges in the Levantine colonies underwrote attempts by individual Genoese to expand into a number of different Mediterranean markets, with attendant changes in the goods traded and the rapid expansion of new forms of commercial credit. The protection and privileges provided by communal military success before 1150 created the conditions under which individuals and families developed the efficient and enforceable business contracts that became the hallmark of the city's commercial life.²⁹

From 1150 through their defeat in the War of Acre³⁰ in the 1250s, the Genoese focused intensively on developing trade with the crusader ports. These account for between 41% and an astonishing 71% of all recorded Genoese trade between 1233 and 1255.³¹ Along with the crusader ports, the Genoese traded with Muslim Egypt, though relations with Alexandria were volatile due to

27 See *G&G*, 26–7.

28 Balard, *Romanie génoise*, 676.

29 See chap. 15 for a fuller discussion. In contrast to Venice, the commune of Genoa seems to have exercised a much lighter hand in organizing commerce itself, so that when we discuss treaties or diplomacy, we mean the commune of Genoa. When it comes to trade itself, however, this was largely done by individual Genoese on their own account. The city's political economy was not known, however, for strictly separating public and private initiatives, as Taviani's discussion of the *Mahone* makes clear.

30 Also known as the War of Saint Sabas; discussed in chap. 17, pp. 489–90.

31 Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1989), #1, table after 489.

the complex political and military events in the Holy Land.³² Likewise, the Genoese pursued a similar strategy of seeking privileges from the Byzantine Empire, although their efforts there were largely stymied because of Venice's long history with the Empire—as well as the fallout of the Fourth Crusade, which effectively gave the empire into Venetian commercial hegemony. The Genoese were not excluded from *Romania*, but their presence there was minimal; instead, they focused their attention on the Crusader states.³³

Although the major ports of the east dominated Genoese trade, the wealth extracted from trade with the Levant underwrote both private trade and publicly-organized military activity elsewhere, aimed alternately at provisioning the city, obtaining raw materials, or old-fashioned plunder. In the twelfth century, Sicily became Genoa's main source of grain supply. At one point Genoa occupied Siracusa, established a protectorate over Messina, and gained an indirect form of control over Malta. Southern France provided grain and salt, and Sardinia offered raw materials, while in Africa, the key item of interest was gold. The Genoese also exported furs, grain, and wool, and intervened in wars between Muslim princes, establishing a veiled protectorate over Ceuta in 1231–7.³⁴ Whatever position one takes regarding the Genoese search for new trade goods and a macroeconomic trade deficit with the east, there is general agreement that the city's rising prosperity between the mid-twelfth and the mid-thirteenth century was predicated upon its Levant trade.³⁵

The period after 1150 is also one in which we first begin to be able to track the techniques and content of Genoese commerce, beginning with the notarial records of Giovanni *scriba* (1154–64).³⁶ The sheer mass of extant contracts—and thus even of the relatively few ones that contain precise information about the movements of goods—has turned them into the cornerstone of what we know not just about Genoa's commerce, but also about high and late medieval Mediterranean trade at large.³⁷ It seems that at the outset of the Commercial Revolution, Europe had little to offer the markets of the eastern Mediterranean. Silver was the Latins' main export item in the twelfth century, along with a variety of staples and raw materials scarce on the southern shores of the sea.

32 Ashtor, "Regno dei Crociati," 39–42.

33 Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1978), 17–45; *Romanie génoise* (1989) #1; Origone, *Bisanzio e Genova*.

34 Basso, *Insedimento e commercio*, 31–46; G & G, 122.

35 Day, "Levant Trade."

36 *Cartolare di Giovanni Scriba*. Cf. discussion in chap. 1 of this volume, pp. 43–4.

37 Balletto, *Genova, Mediterraneo*, can serve as an excellent introduction to the use of notarial records in historical research.

As Genoese investment in the Holy Land took off, new forms of contract multiply in the documents.³⁸ The best-known of these was the *commenda* contract, a form of single-voyage partnership that broadened participation in trade by limiting investors' risk and allowing individuals with even minimal amounts of working capital to invest.³⁹ Increased contractual sophistication matched a change in exports, away from agricultural products and war material and toward cloth from Flanders, France, and Lombardy, alongside ever-present silver.⁴⁰

Thus, by around 1200, the defining features of Genoese trade at the heyday of the Commercial Revolution were: a trade network that spanned Europe and the Mediterranean, importing high-value luxuries (especially spices and silks) in exchange for cloth, silver, or raw materials, protected by military force but organized around simple and effective business contracts.⁴¹ The Genoese had leveraged both military and commercial power to connect distinct economic regions: a more populous, prosperous, and sophisticated south with a poorer but growing north.

Genoa and Trade, 1260–1350

The investment of wealth into trade and naval warfare became the distinctive feature of the Genoese economy.⁴² With so many eggs in one basket, however, defeat in the war of Acre (1256–8) by Venice and its allies nearly relegated Genoa to regional status. Genoese Levantine trade ground to an abrupt halt, plummeting to 1.6% of all recorded trade in 1261 and to 0.3% in 1262.⁴³ The Genoese had reaped the profits of the Levantine trade on the back of their navigational and commercial skills, including “the ability to draw on resources from the whole population through flexible equity partnerships.”⁴⁴ However, the rewards of political opportunism (such as publicly-coordinated military

38 Ashtor, “Regno dei Crociati,” 33; Balard, “Genovesi in Siria-Palestina,” 18.

39 Discussed in more detail in chap. 15, pp. 428–9; but see also Pistarino, “Genova e il vicino Oriente,” 73, 91. The best introduction to trade and business in the Mediterranean remains Lopez/Raymond, *Medieval Trade*.

40 On textiles: Ashtor, “Regno dei Crociati,” 45–9; Balletto, “Fonti notarili genovesi,” 188; Balard, “Transports maritimes,” 171–2. On war material: Stantchev, *Spiritual Rationality*, 77–87.

41 G&G, 62–3.

42 G&G, 64.

43 Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1989), #1, table after 489.

44 CASD, 26.

action and extensive collective privileges) and Genoa's indispensability as a military ally had put its citizens in a position to develop and profit from this trade. So Genoa's answer to the undoing of its Levantine trade looks like a conscious attempt to replicate the fortuitous events resulting from the First Crusade. On March 13, 1261, Genoa concluded the Treaty of Nymphaeum with Emperor Michael VIII of Nicaea, the most successful of the Byzantine successor states established after the Latin sack of Constantinople in 1204. In typical Byzantine fashion, Michael VIII exchanged economic for political and military interests.⁴⁵ Genoa's citizens were promised exceptional trade privileges, including unrestricted and untaxed grain exports and free access to the Black Sea (from which all other Latins except for the Pisans were to be excluded), and equally extensive extraterritorial rights, including virtual control of the important port of Smyrna (now İzmir, Turkey). In return, the Genoese would compensate for Michael VIII's lack of a powerful naval force in the reconquest and defense of Constantinople.⁴⁶ When Michael's forces retook the imperial city, the Genoese faced the prospect of replacing Venice as the dominant power in *Romania* at no cost to themselves. Thus adaptability and aggressive opportunism propelled Genoa past the crisis caused by the War of Acre. Then sheer luck in the form of major political and economic transformations caused by the Mongol conquests turned the period between the 1260s and 1340s into the apogee of Genoese commercial and naval power.

Earlier, between about 1100 and the 1250s, an extraordinary commercial expansion in the Crusader states had fueled the Genoese economy. Now, in what Geo Pistarino called a second phase of Genoese eastwards expansion,⁴⁷ both private merchants and the commune focused more on the Black Sea and the northeastern Aegean, creating a single commercial network that spanned from Trebizond to Southampton.⁴⁸ The Mongol peace, the Mamluk extinguishing of the Crusader states in 1291, and associated papal trade restrictions did not altogether eliminate the Genoese presence in the Levant. They did, however, temporarily re-direct much of the spice trade from its traditional outlets of Alexandria and Syria to the Black Sea shores (as well as to Cyprus and Cilicia).⁴⁹

45 In addition to the works cited above see Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins*. On the Treaty, see discussions in chaps. 17, p. 490, and 18, pp. 507–8.

46 Epstein, *Purity Lost*, 100–8; Origone, *Bisanzio e Genova*, 119–23; Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1978), 42–5.

47 Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 123.

48 Basso, *Insediamenti e commercio*, 69–81.

49 This was already well understood by Heyd, *Commerce du Levant*, 372–8. For legal restrictions and actual trade see respectively Stantchev, *Spiritual Rationality*, 119–33, and

Although trade in *Romania* did not compensate overnight for the losses in the Levant,⁵⁰ the Black Sea soon became a “turntable of trade,”⁵¹ and formerly peripheral areas like the Bulgarian shores became integrated into Europe’s economy.⁵² Whether confined to the decades around 1300⁵³ or extended further into the fourteenth century,⁵⁴ the result has long been labeled the heyday of Genoa. Tax-farming records suggest that medieval Genoese commerce skyrocketed between the 1270s and the 1290s, reaching its peak in 1293.⁵⁵ The scholarly consensus is that Genoese freedom in exploiting the resources of the Black Sea and *Romania* greatly stimulated local production and integrated these areas into the European economy.⁵⁶ Genoese trade, notably, did not strangle locally-managed commerce and shipping.⁵⁷ Countryside and ports, Byzantine east and Latin west were better integrated, and monetary circulation increased.⁵⁸

The Genoese commercial system in the east was one of three hubs and a plethora of spokes. Caffa (now Feodosia; figs. 79–80), established by the Genoese on the shores of the Crimea in the 1270s, became the Black Sea’s leading emporium. The “pearl” of Genoa’s possessions,⁵⁹ Caffa was one terminus of a transcontinental overland route in luxury goods made possible by the *Pax Mongolica*. Even more importantly, Caffa was the hub to which slaves from the Caucasus and elsewhere and a variety of regional products—from grains, wax, and furs to salt and salted fish—were brought for redistribution.⁶⁰ Local merchants played an active role in intra-Black Sea commerce, but the

Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 17–63. For the Mongol impact on Eurasian trade routes see (broadly) Ciociltan, *Mongols and the Black Sea*, and (briefly) Morgan, “Mongols and the Eastern Mediterranean.”

50 Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 114.

51 Bratianu, *Mer Noire*, 225–52. Cf. the related discussions of Genoese trade and settlements in the Black Sea in chaps. 15, pp. 441–44, and 18, pp. 507–13.

52 Gjuzele, *Medieval Bulgaria*.

53 Caro, *Supremazia*, 14–15.

54 Pistarino, “Genova e i genovesi.”

55 Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*, 18 (fig. 1).

56 The literature on the subject is immense. The cornerstone work is Balard, *Romanie Génoise* (1978), but see also *Romanie Génoise* (1989). For an overview, see Basso, *Insedimenti e commercio*, and the literature cited therein.

57 Karpov, *Italianskie morskoe respubliki*; Laiou, *Economic History of Byzantium*; Jacoby, *Byzantium*, art. 9.

58 Jacoby, *Commercial Exchange*, art. 9, 233.

59 Pistarino, “Oriente e Occidente,” 44.

60 Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 135–6.

Genoese controlled the trunk route to Constantinople and the West. This route passed through Pera, which in 1267 became a Genoese-run town across the Golden Horn from Constantinople (figs. 82–3). At first “an independent economic competitor of the capital,”⁶¹ Pera soon displaced Constantinople itself as a commercial hub and the geographically indispensable transit point between the Black Sea and the Aegean. In 1304, the island of Chios completed the triad of what Basso calls the “anchor points” on which Genoa’s commercial empire was thereafter based (Chios was lost in 1329 and reoccupied in 1347). Furthermore, Chios was a production center in its own right. Most notably, it provided mastic, for which there was high demand in Muslim lands. Chios was also a convenient hub for goods coming from Anatolia, chief among which was alum, the fixative indispensable to Europe’s textile industry, and a well-placed transit station for any voyages to Constantinople/Pera and the Black Sea.⁶² A number of smaller settlements—business investments resulting from strategic necessity—complemented the great emporia.⁶³ Among the other key trade destinations for the Genoese were Trebizond and Tabriz which served as important transit points of the trade in spices and silk.⁶⁴ Overall, spices, silk, alum, wheat, wax, leather, fur, cotton, lead, and copper were the key items that the Genoese obtained in *Romania* in return mostly for silver and textiles as well as iron and iron products, gold, wine, olive oil, and other foodstuffs from a variety of Mediterranean ports.⁶⁵

Genoese expansion into the Black Sea was a continuous process from the 1260s until the 1340s. In 1278–88 and after 1302–3, Constantinople and the Black Sea accounted for over 50% of Genoa’s investment in Mediterranean commerce; in 1342, the trade volume in Pera reached the enormous sum of 1,500,000 *lire genovesi*.⁶⁶ What is often missed from brief overviews of Genoa’s commercial expansion, however, is the extreme volatility of commercial exchanges in the medieval Mediterranean as political chaos took its toll. In fact, fluctuations in Genoese investments could be annual: nothing invested in *Romania* in 1277, but 60% of Mediterranean total in 1278; nothing in 1295, but over 40% in 1296.⁶⁷ Profits, too, fluctuated significantly, but Black Sea

61 Matschke, “Commerce, Trade, Markets,” 771.

62 On the three hubs, see Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1978), 179–227, in brief, Basso, *Insedimenti e commercio*, 46–53. On alum, Jacoby, “Production et commerce.”

63 Airaldi, “Genovesi alle foci del Danubio,” 33–9.

64 On silk see specifically Jacoby, *Byzantium*, art. 10, and his *Commercial Exchange*, art. 11.

65 Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1978), 717–848.

66 Ibid., 2.682.

67 Ibid., 2.681 (table).

investments seem to have typically returned 15–20%.⁶⁸ As with the crusader states earlier in the thirteenth century, so in *Romania* between the 1260s and the 1340s: there was a broad participation in commercial ventures. Small investments (under 50 *lire*) made 52.6% of all contracts vs. 4.7% for those contracted by the commercial elite (over 1,000 *lire*). Broad participation, however, should not be confused with equal relevance: small investments made only 4.3% of total investment vs. 53.2% for very large ones.⁶⁹

While there is little reason to label most Genoese commercial enterprise in *Romania* as “exploitative,” there was one aspect of this economic activity that hardly benefited local populations. Michael McCormick has argued that the export of some Europeans by others was a crucial factor in the emergence of Europe’s economy, a commerce in which Genoa seems to have had little if any relevance.⁷⁰ While slaves were no longer among the west’s own exports, the Genoese became the key middlemen in a late medieval slave trade fueled by a demand for domestic servants in the west and military slaves in Egypt.⁷¹ A variety of people—whose ethnic labels should be used with caution—were purchased in the northern Black Sea. Women represented roughly two-thirds of all slaves in Genoa throughout this period, while slaves made anywhere between 4 and 10% of Genoa’s population in 1381.⁷² Female slaves were domestic servants, while males may have played limited roles in agriculture and artisanal production. In Genoa, slaves cost about 20–25% more than they did in Caffa.⁷³ Turkish and Latin raids upon Aegean islands and the Balkans turned *Romania*, too, into a source of slaves. Thus the integration of the Black and Aegean Seas into Europe’s economy was partly predicated upon the slave trade.⁷⁴

If the Genoese commercial network became medieval Europe’s most notable one in the years around 1300, however, it was not only due to unprecedented expansion in the east. Like in the eastern Mediterranean, the Genoese network in the west was re-oriented and expanded in the second half of the thirteenth century. Just as the Near East lost its primacy in the Genoese system, so did western North Africa, whose share in Genoese trade declined from about 25% in the 1250s to 4% in 1313. The Genoese “answer,” or rather the cumulative

68 Ibid., 2.870–9.

69 Ibid., 2.696. Cf. related discussion in chap. 7, p. 174.

70 McCormick, *Origins*, 733–77.

71 The most comprehensive work remains Verlinden, *L’Esclavage*, but see also Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, and Amitai/Cluse, *Slavery*.

72 Cluse, “Zur Repräsentation.” On slaves in Genoa see also chap. 7, pp. 184–5.

73 Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1978), 2.785–833.

74 Verlinden, *L’Esclavage*, vol. 2.

result of individual entrepreneurship, was expansion to the northwest. France was the leading Genoese western trade partner, with cloth as its major export, but from 1277 Genoese galleys sailed to Flanders, where Bruges was an “epicenter” of interconnecting commercial networks (figs. 77–8).⁷⁵ In 1278 a Genoese galley loaded with alum opened the way to England, which at this time played second fiddle commercially to Flanders. The volume of Genoese trade with England, however, remained quite limited until the last quarter of the fourteenth century. Wool dominated English exports at this time while spices may have been the major import.⁷⁶

While the European northwest could partly compensate for market losses in the Muslim Mediterranean, problems closer to home proved harder for Genoa to remedy. The naval defeat of Pisa at Meloria in 1284 eliminated a hated but already declining rival. The crown of Aragon took Pisa's role as Genoa's maritime archrival and the papal transfer of Sardinia to Aragon in 1297 only exacerbated the new rivalry. At this time Genoa controlled Corsica and Sardinia: Corsica was considered to be of immense strategic relevance, but its economic importance was confined to agricultural products like wine, grain, cheese, and wax; in exchange, cloth and slaves were shipped to the island.⁷⁷ Sardinia's economic role, which included the export of silver, was more significant.⁷⁸ Genoa's attempts to counter the rising star of Aragon, however, proved futile.⁷⁹

The Genoese economic exploits overseas were thus predicated upon the aggressive exploitation of whatever commercial opportunities resulted from a constantly volatile political situation, both collectively through political action or treaties and through private initiative, as in the activities of Benedetto Zaccaria in Phocaea (now Foça, Turkey) and Chios.⁸⁰ Monopolistic hegemony was the ultimate goal. Establishing monopolies over islands, like Chios, or over a particular trade, like that in alum, proved both feasible and profitable. Attempts to monopolize whole geographic areas, however, brought the Genoese and their Venetian archrivals to the brink of collapse. In 1294–9, 1351–2, and 1377–9 access to and commercial dominance over the Black Sea was the

75 Nicolini, “Inghilterra,” 95. On Genoese-Flemish cultural connections: chaps. 10, pp. 309–13, and 11, pp. 339–40; on Genoese communities in Flanders and England more generally: chap. 18, pp. 515–16.

76 Ibid., 215–25, also “Paesi Bassi,” 130.

77 Petti Balbi, *Genova e Corsica*, esp. 153–65.

78 G&G, 143.

79 Casula, *Sardegna*.

80 Lopez, *Genova marinara*.

cause of three large-scale wars that weakened these commercial and maritime superpowers without providing either one with a competitive edge.⁸¹

The Domestic Economy, 1100–1500

Although the Genoese economy was unusually dependent on and keyed to activity throughout the Mediterranean, the city itself underwent substantial economic change during the Middle Ages. Much of this change was the result, both direct and indirect, of commerce. For this reason, both production and local or regional economic life have attracted much less attention than the more glamorous and profitable activities of the Genoese in the Black Sea, the Levant, Sicily, and elsewhere. Trade may have been the primary driver in Genoa's rapid economic growth, but no medieval city lived by commerce alone.

The period of Genoa's most rapid expansion as a trading hub, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, saw substantial growth evident in both population and the material foundations of the city. Multiple times the city was forced to expand its walls, and population estimates suggest that the city grew rapidly.⁸² The picture painted by the city's physical fabric, population, and commercial dynamics all suggest aggregate growth, but the extent to which these translated into improved living conditions as a whole are unclear. Epstein, for example, found that the value of labor contracts remained relatively stable during the thirteenth century, while the price of other goods, slaves in particular, increased substantially—thus while trade “profited” everyone to some extent, the bulk of the improvement went to holders of capital, rather than labor.⁸³ Likewise, the city did not simply replicate itself outward; rather, economic growth tended to produce concentrations of both economic and political power around the neighborhoods of powerful noble families.⁸⁴ This ultimately produced a city in which labor was physically, economically, and politically peripheral relative to an old core, especially in market areas and

81 See in general Bratianu, *Mer Noire*, 253–78, and Papacostea, “*Quod non iretur*,” 201–17. For more depth, Caro, *Supremazia* 2, ch. 6; Balard, *Romanie génoise* (1989), art. 2; Costa, “Sulla battaglia,” 197–210; Thiriet, *Etudes*, art. 2.

82 On the physical fabric of the city, see chap. 9, pp. 220–22, and *UCP*. Felloni gives some estimates on population: “*Struttura*,” 168–70.

83 Epstein, “Labour.”

84 *UCP*, 96–8. Documentary and archaeological records indicate a concentration of habitation around market areas and the dependence of foreign communities on the particular families that granted them residence. For an example of a land-swap between noble families, each seeking to compose a concentrated family zone in the city, 226.

accesses to the port, around which the wealthy and influential focused their power visibly. The Genoese did not simply ship goods abroad, and the city was home to productive activity. However, organization into guilds was relatively late (guild consuls are only attested from 1212) and many of the artisans living and working in Genoa were immigrants, either from Liguria or further abroad.⁸⁵

The disequilibria of the thirteenth century were laid bare in the fourteenth. When guilds appear in a major way in the sources in the fourteenth century, we can see how the growth of the thirteenth century led to major distributional conflicts in the fourteenth. So-called popular groups officially ejected the nobles from power in 1339, but those who benefited most politically and economically were professionals whose lifestyle and activities tied them closely to the city's old mercantile elite (notaries, bankers, and drapers, i.e. cloth merchants).⁸⁶ The alliance between the richest of the *popolo* and the nobility had further deleterious effects, as the rising costs of defending Genoa's trading privileges came to be financed ever more by consumption taxes on the necessities of life (grain, wine, meat) and as a result pushed ever more firmly onto the backs of the poor.⁸⁷ Increased wealth did nothing to alleviate the strains of competing for communal office, and the incessant factional disputes that roiled the city were a serious economic handicap; Francesco di Marco Datini's correspondence is an eloquent witness to the way civil strife could shut commerce down both internally and externally.⁸⁸

These social strains in the city were exacerbated by a more general contraction of economic activity across Europe from roughly the close of the thirteenth century through the arrival of the plague in 1347.⁸⁹ Genoa's population, estimated at anywhere from under 50,000 to nearly 100,000 on the eve of the epidemic, declined precipitously, as sales taxes on foodstuffs declined from 35% to 50%.⁹⁰ The population contraction must have had economic effects, but the disease's full impact has not been definitively established. The overall value of trade declined, staying largely below 70% of its 1293 peak.⁹¹ On the other hand, per-capita wealth may actually have increased.⁹² Some have

85 Petti Balbi, "Apprendisti e artigiani," 135–7, and Lopez, "L'attività economica," 166–270. See also Bezzina, *Artigiani*, 31–7, and her discussion in chap. 7, pp. 174–5.

86 See chaps. 5, pp. 133–6, and 7, pp. 171–3; also Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 255–94.

87 See below.

88 Giagnacovo, *Mercanti toscani*, 79–118.

89 See in brief Hunt/Murray, *History of Business*.

90 On population, see Felloni, "Struttura," 168–70. For corroboration in sales taxes on foodstuffs, see Day, *Douanes*, lxxviii–xxx.

91 G & G, 221.

92 G & G, 211–21, on the effects of the plague.

identified a rise in wages after the plague, as has been suggested in Florence, but this work is incomplete and even the data for Florence may not be as conclusive as previously imagined.⁹³ Notarial contracts and tax assessments indicate a general weakening of the economy in the mid-fourteenth century, but at the same time this must be balanced against the fact that some groups, especially those trading in luxuries, seem to have weathered the storm without major disruption.⁹⁴ Genoa was still capable of attracting skilled foreign labor from abroad—for example, Lucchese silk workers—yet these communities do not seem to have put down deep roots, for no native Genoese silk industry appears to have taken off during the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.⁹⁵ A generalized “loss of nerve” may have been taking place among some merchants, but a complex urban economy like Genoa’s was always moving in multiple directions at once, and important work remains to be done concerning the demonstrable effects of the plague and the attendant loss of population both at home and abroad.⁹⁶ In the long run, the Black Death probably exacerbated existing trends, concentrating wealth in fewer hands, with a corresponding decline in social mobility as control of communal monopolies and appointment to political office became the keys to social mobility.⁹⁷

Genoa’s dramatic transformation from 1000 to 1500 is therefore visible in the city itself, nowhere more clearly than in the transformation of the city’s ruling class. By 1400, the city’s eleventh-century political and economic elite, the noble clans that led Genoa’s early and aggressive maritime plundering expeditions, no longer dominated civic life. Instead, the city was led by a conglomeration of more recently-risen noble families as well as popular ones (Lomellini, Giustiniani), all of whom had made their fortunes in banking and overseas trade. While some of them, like the Doria, were still territorial lords, these lordships were more often the outcome of commercial profit than a precondition for it.

Public and Private Finance, 1100–1400

Although finance was always an indispensable adjunct to trade, Genoa was a trading power first and a banking and financial power second. Indeed,

93 Balard, “Prix et salaires,” 47–59. For Florence, see Caferro, “Petrarch’s War.”

94 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 282.

95 Petti Balbi. “Presenze straniere.”

96 See Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*, for the “loss of nerve” argument.

97 Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*, 18–19, 27, 43–57; *CASD*, 161–7.

development in both private and public finances from the twelfth through fourteenth centuries was driven by pressures associated with trade and the need to protect Genoese shipping.⁹⁸ Only at the turn of the fifteenth century did financial activity take on a life of its own, as well as its own distinctive governing institution, the Casa di San Giorgio.

In the twelfth century, both public and private finance were relatively undeveloped:⁹⁹ tellingly, early expeditions to Almería and Tortosa in the 1150s required outside credit in the form of loans taken in Piacenza.¹⁰⁰ Likewise in the city itself, most actual banking seems to have been done by outsiders. This is not to say that the Genoese were not involved, but even into the thirteenth century the Genoese themselves operated few banks, preferring to serve as middlemen, purchasing or leasing licensed banking tables from the commune before subleasing them to outsiders who performed the actual banking functions.¹⁰¹ Taxation and public finance likewise seem to have been dominated by elite families, who held most public revenues, either on long-term lease or by outright purchase.

The thirteenth century marked a major period of transition in both public and private finance, as both warfare and commerce required increasing sums of capital.¹⁰² Thus this period saw a major transformation in the old apparatus of communal finance, which was, as always, unable to cover extraordinary costs for military expeditions out of mediocre ordinary revenues.¹⁰³ In the early thirteenth century, early experiments with a *collecta* (a periodic direct tax on private wealth) were increasingly replaced by *compere*, which initially were forced loans, compensated by communal taxes, each with a fixed term of repayment. By the late thirteenth century, elite self-interest and the frequency of forced loans made repayment dates increasingly irrelevant, effectively making the *compere* a permanent and ever more dominant part of communal finance. The wars with Venice in the 1290s marked a watershed in this regard. The techniques of private banking seem to have changed less, with most specialists still coming from outside the city while Genoese magnate and artisan

98 For a brief introduction to both, Felloni, "Ricchezza privata." The reference work for public finances remains Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*.

99 Felloni, "Note sulla finanza."

100 For the expedition, G&G, 49–52; for relations with Piacenza, Lopez, *Prima crisi*, 42–4, 47–9.

101 Lopez, *Prima crisi*; also Felloni, "Ricchezza privata," 307–14.

102 Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*, remains the reference work for the early period.

103 Felloni, "Ricchezza privata," 301–3.

families banked as a supplement to other concerns, particularly commerce or the wool trade.¹⁰⁴

Only in retrospect is the future turn of Genoa's elite to finance rather than commerce visible in the fourteenth century. Banking remained peripheral to other forms of economic activity, more a popular than a noble activity, and closely linked with the wool trade.¹⁰⁵ Even for those families like the Lomellini who adopted finance as one of their distinctive forms of economic activity, this was at least as much about maintaining a close relationship with the commune and with power as profit in lending itself.¹⁰⁶ New *compere* continued to be contracted and older ones refinanced, with little changing other than the volume of borrowing and, as a result, the rapid acceleration of taxation.¹⁰⁷ Thus during this period banks become increasingly visible in the sources, both as places to receive interest from shares in the *compere* and as guarantors for those purchasing the tax farms that paid that interest, suggesting that communal fiscal pressure likely had important spillover effects on private finance.¹⁰⁸

Changing Patterns of Trade, 1350–1500

Between 1350 and 1500, several important shifts in Genoese trade occurred. The economic significance of the eastern trade declined, while that of northwestern Europe increased dramatically. Also, Genoese commerce gradually shifted toward bulkier goods carried on large roundships, and in the fifteenth century, carracks, travelling directly between the Aegean and the Levant to Sicily, Naples, Flanders, and England, which tended to separate the long-distance commerce of the Genoese elite from the economic life of the port city itself.¹⁰⁹

In the mid-fourteenth century, the disintegration of the Mongol states helped shift more of the transcontinental spice trade toward Mamluk Egypt. This changed Genoa's commercial outlook, as well as that of its main rival, Venice, albeit in different ways. Both halted trade with the Ilkhanid Empire

104 On the *compere*, see chap. 15, pp. 429–30 and 437–40; also Felloni, "Ricchezza privata," 310, and Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*.

105 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 268–77.

106 Anzai, "Attitudes"; also Felloni, "Ricchezza privata," 313n54, for a sense of the magnitude of the Lomellini's financial business.

107 For general developments, Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*. For the commune's ordinary budget, Buongiorno, *Bilancio*. The fortunes of the tax on salt can stand in effectively for many other commodities; Gioffrè, "Commercio genovese del sale"; Day, *Douanes*.

108 Felloni, "Ricchezza privata," 312.

109 See the related discussions in chaps. 16, pp. 457–62, and 18, pp. 515–16.

around 1340 and cooperated in fighting the Golden Horde in the Crimea. Both also pressed the papacy to re-allow trade with Mamluk Egypt, where they obtained lower custom dues than all other western merchants. The Genoese continued to trade with the east, and the value of trade there continued to represent some 23–28% of the total.¹¹⁰ Yet while the Venetians continued to profit most from high-end trade carried out in annual convoys of large merchant galleys, Genoese merchants increasingly responded to changing conditions by shifting toward bulk goods and markets in northwestern Europe.¹¹¹

Thanks to the extraordinary rise of English textile production, Genoese commercial relations with England grew rapidly in the 1370s, eclipsing Flanders as the northwestern destination of choice.¹¹² Cogs had by this time replaced the galley as Genoa's main shipping vessel, and according to English records were superseded in turn by carracks by 1383–4. This meant tripling the carrying capacity of a single vessel from about 300 metric tons to about 950 metric tons. The largest vessels in Europe, these carried not only alum from Phocaea, but also a variety of luxury products from the Levant, Italy, and Iberia.¹¹³ Cloth had by this time become an important English export even though it had not yet supplanted wool. Direct Genoese shipping to the northwest integrated the ports of Southampton, Sandwich, and London into the European economy at large, cementing Genoese involvement with affairs in the west.¹¹⁴

Traffic to the northwest tended, as in the past, to fluctuate depending on both political and market conditions. After a crisis in 1412–21 due to the resentment of English merchants, during which Genoese ships were redirected to Flanders, Genoa obtained a new and highly advantageous treaty. Starting in the 1420s, the Genoese unloaded an average of 7,000 metric tons of merchandise in England, exceeding the capacity of all other Mediterranean fleets combined. What followed has been characterized as the “golden period” of Genoese trade in England, ending in 1458. The situation in Flanders was not much different: in 1426–7 as many as 20 Genoese carracks loaded with merchandise like alum from Anatolia and dry fruit from Iberia sailed to Sluis/Bruges. From 1425 to 1460 nine Genoese carracks, on the average, visited England annually, probably half of which made it to Sluis, too.¹¹⁵

110 Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 103–366, 433–512.

111 Broadly, Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*; in short, Lopez, “Venise et Gênes,” 35–42. For a different assessment, Felloni, “Ricchezza privata.”

112 Nicolini, “Paesi Bassi,” 130.

113 Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*, 15.

114 Nicolini, “Inghilterra,” 225–43.

115 Nicolini, “Paesi Bassi,” 106–14, 131.

The change in destination to northwest Europe was part of a change in the traditional balance in Genoese trade between long-distance commerce and regional exchange, in favor of the former. The cogs and even larger carracks deployed between Chios and Southampton were few in number, with small crews, which reduced employment in maritime transportation.¹¹⁶ The great routes of late medieval Genoese international commerce increasingly skipped Genoa itself, preferring to connect alum from Phocaea, wines from Romania, and spices from Alexandria more directly with England and Flanders. Southern Italy and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia had once played a pivotal role in Genoa's growth, but hostilities with the Crown of Aragon limited access to ports there, damaging Genoese interests. Thus, the great Genoese ships sometimes stopped instead at Tunis, Bugia, and especially in Iberian ports before heading north to Southampton.¹¹⁷ In any case, this meant that only a few of the now-larger ships went north to Genoa, so that the economic activities of the Genoese elite were increasingly distinct from the economic life of Genoa itself, as long-distance patterns of trade came to touch the city much less directly.

This progressive change in the elite's activities resulted in the sixteenth century in a shift from commercial to financial activity in the northwest. As only expensive items, like textiles and weapons, were still worth trading in the northwest, the Genoese in England moved from Southampton to London, to better conduct their financial, rather than commercial, affairs. This smaller community of financiers was also affected by religious politics. The broken marriage between Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon and the Reformation made the Genoese choose definitively between Spain and England in the early 1530s. The vast majority of the Genoese chose Spain. While some Genoese remained deeply engaged in business in Bruges and then in Antwerp, on the whole the Genoese, whether involved in trade or finance, found better opportunities in Castile and Granada.¹¹⁸

The re-orientation of the Genoese elite from commerce to finance in the western Mediterranean and the Atlantic went hand-in-hand with a corresponding decline in the eastern half of the commercial network. In the fourteenth century, Genoa had traded actively with the various Turkish emirates competing for dominance in Anatolia, acquiring slaves, spices and grain in

116 GXV, 267–320.

117 Basso, *Insediamenti e commercio*, 81–5, 108–11; Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*, 121.

118 Nicolini, "Inghilterra," 243–84; Petti Balbi, *Mercanti e nationes*, 19–53; Basso, *Insediamenti e commercio*, 116–22, 158–63, 166; Salicrù i Lluç, *Sultanato nazari*.

exchange for soap, mastic, wine, and cloth.¹¹⁹ While the rise of the Ottomans has traditionally been blamed for the decline of Genoese commerce in the east, this is debatable.¹²⁰ On the one hand, the Ottomans did not seek to chase western merchants out, and actually sought to foster trade by constructing badestans, caravanserais, and marketplaces, and provided, as best they could, for the maintenance and safety of trade routes.¹²¹

On the other hand, the Ottoman interest in foreign merchants was primarily fiscal.¹²² Mehmed II, in addition to conquering Constantinople, sought to control strategic areas like the Straits, and specific trades, like that in slaves. He also ended Genoese extraterritoriality in Pera, taxed the previously exempt Genoese, even if only modestly, and seized a variety of Genoese settlements: Old Phocaea (Foça) in 1455, Lesbos in 1462, and the Black Sea settlements in 1475. Mehmed's determination to restore his new imperial capital, too, means that the capital city consumed more of the economic product of its hinterland, decreasing integration between east and west.¹²³ Given that most Anatolian merchandise was interchangeable with goods from elsewhere, Ottoman actions and policies could not help but nudge the Genoese in different directions economically. In fact, the relevance of the Black Sea and Pera to the west had greatly diminished before the 1450s, leaving Chios (Genoese until 1566) as the key emporium in the east.¹²⁴ The Genoese delivery of eastern goods to England and Flanders had taken a dive already in the early fifteenth century. By Mehmed II's time, alum was the only eastern item of relevance in the holds of Genoese carracks sailing to the northwest.¹²⁵

Thus by 1500 the economy of Genoa and the economic activity of the Genoese were no longer coterminous.¹²⁶ While the Venetians found ways to sustain their traditional interests in the east, the Genoese elite chose a different response to new circumstances.¹²⁷ High commerce in the crusading era may have benefited from the resources of the entire city, but it was directed

119 Inalcik, "Turcoman Maritime Principalities"; Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*.

120 Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, 122–33.

121 Inalcik, "Ottoman Economic Mind," 207–8; Inalcik/Quataert, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, 140; Stantchev, *Embargo*, 453–4.

122 Pamuk, *Monetary History*, 13.

123 Inalcik, "Hub of the City," 4.

124 GXV, 363–406.

125 Nicolini, "Inghilterra," 289–90, and Petti Balbi, *Mercanti e nationes*, 47. On alum, see Delumeau, *L'alun*, and Weber, "L'alun de la croisade?"

126 Basso, *Insediamenti e commercio*, 87–102.

127 On the Venetians, see Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 433–512; Stantchev, "Devedo," 43–66, and "Inevitable Conflict?"

by and in the interests of the elite, and by the turn of the sixteenth century, these were increasingly independent of the port city itself. Changing patterns of credit, and the rise of insurance contracts in particular, confirm a picture of a civic elite that was increasingly closed.¹²⁸

Finance and the Casa di San Giorgio: 1400 and Beyond

The fifteenth-century reorientation of long-distance trade toward the west took place at the same time as a major financial transition at home in Genoa. Between 1407 and 1425, the commune and its creditors came to an agreement whereby all of the existing *compere*, heretofore administered separately, would all be incorporated into a single consolidated debt under the administration of the so-called Casa di San Giorgio.¹²⁹ This highly distinctive corporation was able to stabilize the city's finances and also contribute to the stabilization of its political life by absorbing nearly all of the commune's fiscal resources and putting them in the Casa's hands. While ownership of a share in the Casa and its profits was open to all, in practice the institution was governed by a council of rich merchants and financiers who systematically, if informally, excluded rural aristocrats and artisans from its governing councils. Along with collecting many of the city's taxes and running the mint, for several periods the Casa operated its own bank, and also directly governed some of the commune's overseas possessions. By 1500, thanks in part to the Casa, financial practices had become more sophisticated, abstract, and widespread among the Genoese elite, providing the key preconditions for Genoese engagement with the Spanish crown in centuries to come and the "second golden age" of Genoa.

The Genoese Experience and Economic Change

The story outlined above represents a fairly stable consensus about the arc of Genoa's medieval economic growth. Interpretations of this story's broader relevance, however, have varied widely. The city's economic history has attracted interest from non-Genoese scholars because medieval Genoa provides an ideal vantage point from which to consider broader issues in economic history. First, because of the city's deep engagement with long-distance commerce, Genoese economic history is useful for thinking about trade and power in a fragmented

¹²⁸ CASD.

¹²⁹ GXV, 97–192. For a fuller discussion, see chap. 15, pp. 435–44.

medieval Mediterranean. Second, its spectacular growth and financial precocity have led some to identify it either as a harbinger of or a take-off point for modern economic growth.

A “strong” version of the story of Genoa and the Mediterranean figures the city’s inhabitants as forerunners of modern colonial systems. For Lopez, the equation of Genoa’s commercial expansion with colonialism was explicit: his early work called Genoa a “capitalist state” that “put its hands on the natural riches of countries too poor to employ them themselves.”¹³⁰ In a similar vein, David Abulafia has suggested that Genoa’s trading relations with the Kingdom of Sicily were basically exploitative, with commercially-sophisticated northerners exploiting feckless southern kings to put Sicily and the south in economic subjection to the north—poor primary producers condemned to furnish raw materials for a more industrialized north.¹³¹

Without denying any of the facts of Genoa’s exceptional growth, though, other scholars construe the meaning of Genoa’s trade rather differently. Stephan R. Epstein, for example—not to be confused with the historian Steven A. Epstein—argued against Abulafia that Genoa’s role in the Sicilian economy was marginal, and that regional economic activity remained robust despite the (minimal) presence of some northern merchants in the kingdom.¹³² Olivia Remie Constable’s account of Iberian trade used Genoese notarial material extensively, but saw Genoese commerce as successful because it moved unusually quickly to take advantage of circumstance, and not fundamentally driving economic change or creating colonial dependencies in the peninsula.¹³³ In the Iberian case, other research has shown how Genoese commercial contacts might actually stimulate innovation in local production, rather than creating a backward economic periphery.¹³⁴ Most provocatively, Horden and Purcell’s *The Corrupting Sea* has pushed back against a perceived over-emphasis on the importance of high commerce (long-distance, high-value trade in luxuries—a Genoese specialty) to Mediterranean exchange.¹³⁵ Instead, they argue, small-scale, routine patterns of redistribution drove Mediterranean exchange while rapid growth like that enjoyed by medieval Genoa was basically epiphenomenal, dependent on an unchanging background of “low” trade or cabotage.¹³⁶ Likewise, *The Corrupting Sea* privileges

130 Lopez, *Colonie genovesi*, 89.

131 Abulafia, *Two Italies*.

132 Epstein, “Textile Industry”; also *An Island for Itself*.

133 Constable, *Trade and Traders*.

134 García Porras/García, “Genoese Trade Networks.”

135 Horden/Purcell, *Corrupting Sea*, 143–6.

136 *Ibid.*, 65–77.

longue-durée patterns over technical or other innovations, reducing Genoa's "thirteenth-century 'revolution'" and attendant technical developments (such as double-entry bookkeeping), to a mere "change in the sophistication of the self-perpetuating and self-justifying paraphernalia of greed."¹³⁷ The issues at stake between these and other authors are less about the facts of Genoese economic life, which are largely uncontested, than about how to use them in describing broader geographic or longer chronological patterns. What effects, if any, did the activities of the Genoese have on the other economies with which they interacted? Is there anything distinctive about Genoa's medieval economic patterns, or are they merely old patterns in new clothes?

Furthermore, the dramatic nature of Genoa's medieval experience has attracted non-historians interested in the long-run factors behind Europe's modern economic growth.¹³⁸ Institutional economists especially have looked to the past in search of clues to how political, social, even cultural patterns may have determined growth.¹³⁹ In a series of articles beginning in the late 1980s, Avner Greif drew upon Genoese history and sources as part of a broader attempt to explain how the wealthy (and therefore "advanced") medieval Muslim world was overtaken in economic performance by the relatively poor (and therefore "backward") European world.¹⁴⁰ Greif's argument turned on a contrast between the Muslim world (represented by a group of North African Jews), and the European world (represented primarily by the Genoese). In the former, collectivist cultural beliefs generated an economic system in which informal, interpersonal, reputation-based practices enabled trade, while in the latter, a culture of individualism generated an economic system in which formal legal contracts and state coordination enabled trade.¹⁴¹ Over the long run, Greif has argued, the latter system was capable of greater expansion and thus more growth because it coordinated economic relations in larger communities and did not depend on face-to-face relations.

Responses to Greif's work have been heated, although to date his work on the Maghribi Jews has attracted the more stinging critiques.¹⁴² Most recently,

137 Ibid., 293. It is suggestive that the index includes an entry for embroidered booties but none for double-entry bookkeeping.

138 For a discussion of the broader intellectual and institutional background, see Sewell, "Strange Career."

139 This bibliography is vast. A good starting point is North/Thomas, *Rise of the Western World*.

140 Greif, *Institutions*.

141 Ibid., 269–349.

142 For the debate, see the papers posted at <http://web.stanford.edu/~avner/greif-debate.html>. See also the comments of Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*; and Trivellato, *Familiarity of Strangers*.

Francesco Boldizzoni has attacked both Greif's use of game theory and interpretation of the Genoese sources as part of a broader polemic aimed at re-orienting contemporary methods and theories of economic history.¹⁴³ Quentin Van Doosselaere has added to this discussion a massive work of quantitative and network analysis, arguing that Greif's insistence on the role of the state misses the dominant role played by social ties in patterning Genoese trade.¹⁴⁴

As Greif has used Genoa's early growth, other social scientists have seized on the founding of the Casa di San Giorgio (1407) to argue that representative institutions and property rights were the foundation of all economic growth.¹⁴⁵ Fratianni and Spinelli, for example, argue that in fifteenth-century Genoa as in seventeenth-century England, representative institutions that could avoid sovereign default were the key to a financial revolution that spurred modern economic growth.¹⁴⁶ Stasavage, likewise, uses the Casa di San Giorgio as a specific example of a broader trend, focusing on a distinct representative body, the merchant oligarchy, rather than a generic elected body, as responsible for this transformation in European patterns of state credit.¹⁴⁷ As all of these examples show, the economic history of medieval Genoa remains an important point of reference and source of inspiration for understanding economic issues that stretch far beyond the medieval city itself. Genoa's spectacular growth and rapid economic change in the Middle Ages have secured it a privileged place in medieval history and beyond.

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¹⁴³ Boldizzoni, *Poverty of Clio*, 56–60.

¹⁴⁴ CASD.

¹⁴⁵ Interest in the Casa sustains both interest in (mostly theoretical) institutional economic analysis, and more traditional empirical research, because its massive archive holds a wealth of underutilized documentation. Aerts "European Monetary Famine," e.g., uses the Zecca (mint) records. For the archive of the Casa, Felloni, *Inventario*.

¹⁴⁶ Fratianni/Spinelli, "Italian City-States"; also North/Weingast, "Constitutions and Commitment."

¹⁴⁷ Stasavage, *States of Credit*, 117–24.

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Companies, Commerce, and Credit

Carlo Taviani

Between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, a group of German scholars interested in legal history and the history of commerce began to consider the origins of modern financial institutions. Otto Gierke, Levin Goldschmidt, Karl Lehmann, Heinrich Fick, Heinrich Sieveking and the more famous Max Weber studied the juridical characteristics of the first stock companies—such as the English East India Company (EIC, 1600), the Dutch East India Company (VOC, 1602), the Bank of England (1694), and the Mississippi Company (1720)—convinced that they would be able to find their model in the distant past.¹ To them, medieval and Renaissance Genoa was an exemplary case. They believed that Genoese financial and commercial practices were the first manifestations of certain financial and legal principles (such as limited liability) which they believed to be absolute and ahistorical. In studying Genoa, these scholars were less interested in how these institutions developed—an approach nowadays typical of institutional historians²—than in when these “ideal economic characteristics” appeared for the first time, as if they had always been valid and held some platonic existence outside the realm of history.

These scholars were most interested in Genoese economic institutions and practices: namely, the *commenda* (a type of partnership contract), the *compere* (public loans comprising the Genoese commune’s debt system), the *Mahone* (partnerships formed for commercial and military purposes), and the Casa di San Giorgio, or Bank of Saint George (the Genoese commune’s debt system after 1407). Although some historians criticized the idea of a relationship between finance in the medieval Mediterranean (and especially Genoese practices) and finance in northern Europe, the influence of these late nineteenth-century German scholars remained strong through the decades that followed.³ Their studies have determined how subsequent scholars have approached Genoese financial institutions and commercial practices—partly

1 Fick, “Begriff und Geschichte,” 163; Goldschmidt, *Universalgeschichte*, 291; Lehmann, *Geschichte*, 46.4–22; Sieveking, *Genueser Finanzwesen*.

2 On this subject see North, *Institutions*, and David, “Carriers of History.”

3 Schmitthoff, “Origin,” 79.

because of the enduring influence of their views, and partly because no other study has yet matched Heinrich Sieveking's research on the Casa di San Giorgio.⁴

This chapter addresses a few of these Genoese financial institutions—such as the *commenda*, the *compere* system, the *Mahone*, and the Casa di San Giorgio—with the aim of providing both analysis and a reappraisal of past scholarship. According to late nineteenth-century German scholars, Genoa was the first city in which the *commenda* became a widespread financial instrument. In truth, however, some of these institutions were common elsewhere in the Mediterranean, including in Italy. What then makes the Genoese case peculiar? Why were these institutions so common, and why were they so attractive to later historians? The ensuing pages aim to provide answers to both historical and historiographical questions.

The *Commenda*

The *commenda* was a type of contract stipulated in the presence of a notary and setting the terms of the investment in and division of the profits of a (generally maritime) venture. In the *commenda*, an investor (*commendator*) made an agreement with an individual who was about to start a journey in order to buy and sell goods.⁵ Sometimes the investing partner participated in the venture merely by supplying the money while the traveling partner conducted the business (a unilateral *commenda*); in this case only the sum invested was subject to liability. Alternatively, the traveling partner might decide to invest some amount of money as well (a bilateral *commenda*); in this case liability was shared according to the amounts invested. The contract was valid for a single journey, at the end of which it was terminated.

The first examples of Genoese *commenda* agreements date from the mid-twelfth century. As a legal and commercial instrument, however, the

4 Sieveking, *Genueser Finanzwesen*. For the remainder of this chapter I will use the Italian version, *Studio sulle finanze*.

5 This individual is normally referred to in the literature as a “merchant,” but the term carries certain connotations of wealth and class that do not apply here: the *commenda* was a financial instrument used by individuals of all social standings. Moreover, the occupational title “merchant” (Latin *mercator*) becomes common in notarial sources only during the last two decades of the thirteenth century and into the following century. I have therefore been wary of its use when referring in this chapter to earlier periods of the Middle Ages. Many thanks to Denise Bezzina for clarifying this point.

commenda was not unique to Genoa but rather common throughout the medieval Mediterranean world.⁶ Its widespread diffusion is one of the main reasons it has been widely studied during the last three centuries by scholars trying to trace its origins. Yet the Genoese case is significant because it supports the hypothesis that the *commenda* originated in the Muslim areas of the Mediterranean and spread subsequently through Christian territories in the northern Mediterranean. This thesis was first advanced by Avram Udovitch, who denied that the instrument had Roman origins, instead claiming that the Arabic *qirad* (a legal form of profit-sharing) was the antecedent of the *commenda*.⁷ Today, the connection between Muslim financial practices and the Genoese *commenda* is increasingly accepted.⁸ It is important to remember, however, that as an instrument common throughout the Mediterranean, the *commenda* had many names and diverse characteristics in different Italian cities. In Florence, for example, it was known as *accomandita*, and many examples of this type of contract survive in the archives.

The *Compere*

How were large amounts of capital collected in order to equip ships and transact business? Scholars have often asked this question in an attempt to understand how those involved in the great European commercial ventures of the early modern period could engage in oceanic voyages. Even several centuries earlier, however, Genoese merchants traveling to Syria, Lebanon, and the Maghreb were organizing financial partnerships to support their business ventures.

In Genoa, the nexus between commerce and finance is exemplified by the history of the financial term *locum* (Latin for place or site; Italian *luogo*). From the twelfth century onward, multiple investors would pool their capital to fit out a ship or ships for a voyage: in exchange for their money, investors would receive shares called *loca*—referring to parts of the ship or its cargo—which were transferable during the duration of the voyage. This practice created a kind of market that lasted as long as a ship was engaged in a voyage; when the ship returned to Genoa, its shareholders could collect their profits.⁹ Over time the term *locum* began to be used in an analogous fashion to define a share of the revenues

6 CASD, 64.

7 Udovitch, "At the Origins."

8 Çizakça, *Cross-Cultural Borrowing*.

9 Byrne, *Genoese Shipping*, 15–21; Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*, 63.

from tax collection, which the commune outsourced to private collectors (tax farming). Each contract for which the commune received money in return for the collection rights and profits on a particular tax was known as a *compera* (e.g., the *compera* of salt); as the commune's needs grew and investors proliferated, each *compera* was divided into *loca* each nominally worth 100 *lire*.¹⁰ From the early years of the thirteenth century, therefore, the term *locum* referred to a share in the public debt. This change in the term's meaning likely signals the transformation of a commercial instrument into a financial tool.

From the mid-eleventh century onward, private citizens periodically assisted the Genoese commune by investing their capital in forced loans dictated by particular circumstances such as the need for military defence. The *compere*—in essence, the private purchase and administration of communal taxation, which until then had been reserved to the government—were one outcome of this practice; while at first limited to certain periods of need, they gradually became permanent. The earliest *compere* were *compere del Capitolo* (after the *Capitolo*, the communal council); as they increased in number, each *compera* carried the name of the expedition the money collected from its sale was intended to finance: the *compera Venetorum* (*compera* to finance the war against Venice), *compera Corsicae* (for the war in Corsica), the *compera magna pacis*, the *compera Finarii* and *compera Gazarie*, the *compera Sancti Pauli*, and so on.¹¹ As the number of *compere*, *loca*, and shareholders grew, public debt had to be restructured repeatedly. For example, in 1332 a number of *compere* were combined into the *gran compera pacis*, consisting of 6668 *loca*.¹²

Like the *commenda*, the *compera* system was widespread, especially in Italy. In Florence and Venice, this system—which today scholars call public debt—enjoyed a particular popularity. In Florence, the *Monte*, as it was called, existed continuously without interruption, while in Venice, the Republic's debt fluctuated depending on the period. In Genoa, however, the debt system eventually became a consortium in the hands of private creditors—to the extent, as we shall see, that when the Casa di San Giorgio was established, public debt became an institution endowed with such autonomy that it could even compete with the commune.

10 Byrne, *Genoese Shipping*. For a good introduction to these terms: Marsilio, "Genoese Finance."

11 Marengo et al., *Banco*, 25.

12 Marengo et al., *Banco*.

The *Mahona*

In Arabic, the term *ma'ūnah* indicates a mutual assistance association or a special tax assessment.¹³ Between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in Genoa—not far from the north African coast—the term *Mahona* was used to indicate a subscription of capital for military purposes. During the eleventh century the Genoese had extended their dominion in the Mediterranean, but the commune did not possess sufficient resources to defend these conquests. Private citizens therefore contributed the capital necessary to equip the military expeditions planned by the commune; in exchange, they received promises of future repayment or the possibility of exploiting a commercial possession.

The term *Mahona* appears in 1235 during the expedition organized for the defence of Ceuta in north Africa, in 1346 for Chios in the Aegean, in 1373 for Cyprus, and in 1378 for Corsica. The first attestation of the term *Mahona* in the sources therefore refers to Ceuta: a Genoese fleet forced the sultan of Ceuta to pay compensation for damages the Saracens had inflicted upon Genoese merchants in previous years.¹⁴ Since the Genoese fleet had been financed by private citizens, the commune imposed *gabelle* (taxes or assessments) after the expedition in order to reimburse its investors.¹⁵ In the years that followed, these credits were passed from citizen to citizen.¹⁶

Chios is the second documented case. The *Mahona* of Chios was the outcome of an expedition actually aimed at conquering someplace else much closer to Genoa: Monaco (today the principality of Monaco). In 1346 the Genoese commune prepared a defensive fleet against a group of dissident Genoese based there. Since the commune's resources were limited, several private citizens offered to fit out ships for the expedition. In exchange, the commune committed to compensate them up to a maximum of 20,000 *lire*, a sum it planned to obtain by establishing a *compera*. But the commune never launched the expedition against Monaco; instead, the Genoese used the ships to conquer the island of Chios, which was rich in mastic (a resin used in medicine and food), and the city of Phocaea (Italian Focea, now Foça) in Anatolia. The participants in the *Mahona*—called *Mahonenses*—were granted property ownership of and sovereignty over Chios, along with the profits and other incomes

13 On the Arabic word see Vitale, "Maona," and also Lehmann, *Geschichte Entwicklung*.

14 Di Tucci, *Documenti*, 271–340, 320, 324, etc. The term *Mahona* also appears in notarial contracts, accompanying the subscription of the contributors. This generally affirms that the signatory has invested some amount in the *Mahona*.

15 Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*, 53.

16 Ibid.

deriving from it. The *compera* thus enabled the *Mahona* to remain active over a considerable period of time. In particular, the contracts provided for the possibility that not only possession of the land but also legal sovereignty (*iurisdictio*) over the island could pass from the commune to the *Mahona*. In the event of a change of regime in Genoa—namely, if the city no longer remained “under the rule of the people” (*sub statu populi*)—the *Mahonenses* would acquire sovereignty over Chios and Phocaea.¹⁷ The *Mahona* of Chios remained active until 1566, when the island was conquered by the Turks.

The third attested case is the *Mahona* of Cyprus. In 1374 the Genoese attacked King Peter II of Cyprus in retribution for offenses received during the latter’s coronation. Doge Domenico Campofregoso’s brother Pietro—who acted as *amiratus* (admiral) of the expedition on behalf of both the commune and participants in the *Mahona*¹⁸—requested money from a number of Genoese investors to cover military expenses. King Peter was forced to pay compensation to the *Mahonenses* but he died without settling the debt, so the Genoese compelled his successor James I, who had been taken to Genoa as a hostage, to repay 852,000 florins and to sign a contract granting the Genoese the city of Famagusta on Cyprus. In 1403 the Genoese established a new *Mahona* of Cyprus and used the proceeds to fight against James’ son Janus, who had set his ambitions on reclaiming Famagusta. In 1408 the capital of the old *Mahona* of Cyprus was integrated into the Casa di San Giorgio, which acquired all the rights that had previously pertained to the *Mahonenses*.¹⁹

The fourth case attesting the use of the terms *Mahona* and *Mahonenses* in the sources refers to Corsica, which in 1378 the commune granted to a group of four Genoese citizens—two *populares* and two *nobiles*.²⁰ Unlike the episodes discussed above, in this case the commune enfeoffed the territory to just these four citizens, granting them *merum et mixtum imperium* (civil and criminal jurisdiction) and full sovereignty over the island; this gave them much more authority compared to the other *Mahone*.²¹ The enfeoffment document

17 *Et si casus accideret quod absit quod civitas ianuæ non esset sub statu populi tunc et eo casu dicti mahone qui patroni et participes tenere debeant nomine et vice ipsorum participum dicte mahone seu armate ... et dictu casu iurisdictio spetet ad dictos participes*; “Primo trattato,” 280.

18 Cessi, “Studi sulle Maone,” 41.

19 ASG Membranacei 7, 495v–498r.

20 Lodisio Tortorino, Andreolo Fogone, Pellegrino Imperiale, and Lionello Lomellini: Petti Balbi, *Genova e Corsica*, 151.

21 Letteron, “Traité par le quel Gênes,” 42.

does not refer to the four participants as *Mahonenses*, nor is the group called a *Mahona*: instead, they are referred to as citizens and—above all—feudal lords.

Scholarship on the *Mahone* has been heavily influenced by the formalism typical of legal studies. Roberto Cessi, for example, denied that the partnerships for Ceuta and Corsica were actually *Mahone* on the basis that the term *Mahona* did not appear in the documents relative to these two cases.²² Since legal documentation on Ceuta and Corsica is scarce, Cessi depended chiefly for his definition on the legal documentation of the *Mahona* of Chios, which exceeds by far the extant sources of the same nature for the other two *Mahone*: by taking Chios as his basis, Cessi constructed a general paradigm of a *Mahona*.

Subsequent studies have demonstrated, however, that the terms *Mahona* and *Mahonenses* do appear in the documents relative to the military investments for Corsica and Ceuta.²³ Following Cessi's approach, Giovanna Petti Balbi has hypothesized that the terms *Mahona* and *Mahonenses* were used in the case of Corsica by analogy to the *Mahone* of Chios (reorganized in 1373) and Cyprus (established in 1373), concluding that by the time of the Corsican grant (1378), these terms had lost "their original meaning."²⁴ Nonetheless, although Petti Balbi makes a few fundamental criticisms of Cessi's work, she substantially accepts Cessi's interpretation.

According to Petti Balbi, the *Mahona* was an institution only formalized by Genoese law at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The meaning of the terms *Mahona* and *Mahonenses* may therefore have changed over the centuries, and early studies may have overemphasized the legal aspects of the *Mahone*—especially in the case of Chios—failing to consider the more generic use of the term. Roberto Cessi's work was heavily influenced by late nineteenth-century German scholarship, especially by the studies of Sieveking. If we adopt a more general historical approach, however, it is evident that the term's meaning continued to evolve for at least two centuries. To the subscriptions for the conquest of Ceuta (1235) and Corsica (1378)—and therefore the two cases which according to Cessi's legal perspective were not *Mahone*—can be added other examples from the following centuries. In 1437, for example, Borbone Centurione, a merchant banker, lent money to the Genoese commune to acquire grain for the community of Pietrasanta. In the acts of the commune the chancellor specified that the commune had to pay security on the sum of 30,000 *lire* that Centurione was lending, "out of the contributions

²² Cessi, "Studi sulle *Maone*," 8–9.

²³ Petti Balbi has noted the presence of the term *Mahona*: *Genova e Corsica*.

²⁴ Petti Balbi, *Genova e Corsica*, 148.

of the *Mahonensi* or other communal money.”²⁵ In this case the term indicates wider-scale contributions to the repayment effort. Similarly, around 1455–61 a partnership established for the exploitation of iron on Elba was defined as a *Mahona* and its participants *Mahonenses*, even though its Genoese investors did not enjoy administrative rights on the island comparable to those in the fourteenth-century cases mentioned above.²⁶ These last two examples show that during the fifteenth century—two centuries after the first reference to the term *Mahona*—the term still retained the original meaning of one of its possible etymologies, the Arabic *ma'ūnah* (“subscription”). Moreover, these cases show that the term also had wider connotations.

It is not certain that all the *Mahone* possessed every characteristic that scholars have attributed to the *Mahona* of Chios. One last example hitherto overlooked by scholars demonstrates that fresh research is necessary for a full understanding of both the roots of the term and the institution itself. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, a levy on imports—called *Mahone*—was imposed on Catalans by the customs houses of Malaga and Almería in the kingdom of Granada. Other merchants including the Genoese were exempt from this tax.²⁷ In this case the term’s meaning is very different from that in the Genoese cases mentioned above: one is therefore reluctant to hypothesize that the term’s use in the kingdom of Granada was influenced by Genoese practices. Moreover, it is hard to believe that a word of Arabic origin which entered Genoese use during the twelfth century could have any influence on the Arab-Muslim tradition of the kingdom of Granada three centuries later. It is more plausible that in the early years of the fifteenth century the term was being used according to a local, autonomous Arab-Muslim tradition.

Apart from Genoa and the kingdom of Granada, the term *Mahona* is attested in other areas of the Mediterranean and Italy. Like the *commenda* contract and the *compera* system, the *Mahona* spread to Florence and Venice. The examples in those cities date to a later period than the Genoese cases, so we may hypothesize that these institutions derived from the Genoese *Mahona*—especially since the Florentine *Mahone* for the exploitation of iron and the Venetian *Mahone* in Syria both bear strong resemblances to the Genoese institution.²⁸

25 ASG, AS 518, 6or: *usque ad summam librorum trigintimilium ex scripta mahonesium aut alia comunis pecunia.*

26 GXV, 220.

27 Lopez Pérez, *Corona de Aragon*, 312.

28 Bonolis, “Maone genovesi,” and Vallet, “Marchands vénitiens,” 117–20.

The Casa di San Giorgio

The *Casa di San Giorgio* (the House, or more traditionally Bank, of Saint George) has been alternately defined as a bank, public debt, or a proto-joint-stock company. These terms have been borrowed from modern finance and even if they summarize a number of the Casa's characteristics, none of them is actually correct. San Giorgio was public debt inasmuch as the institution managed the debts of the commune (the state debt). However, unlike today's government bonds, the revenue from its shares was not inversely proportional to the shares' value. Since the returns depended directly on the taxes collected (the *gabelle*), the more money was collected from taxes, the more the revenue from ownership of shares increased, and the more the shares' value increased. Furthermore, San Giorgio was not a corporation like the VOC or the EIC, both studied by late nineteenth-century German scholars: the latter were commercial companies while San Giorgio was a financial institution. As with the *Mahone*, the fact that San Giorgio has been called a bank, public debt, and a joint-stock company is the result of late nineteenth-century German scholars' overemphasis on economic and legal structures, and the influence of this scholarly tradition on contemporary economic history.

San Giorgio was very different from other contemporary debt systems. Unlike the debt systems of all other Italian republican cities with extensive territories (such as Florence or Venice), or those of the medieval and early modern European monarchies, San Giorgio was a corporate body representing private creditors with its own powers separate from those of the commune. Furthermore, the institution gradually accumulated rights and powers that were originally prerogatives of the commune. No other debt system in Europe developed such a degree of autonomy with respect to the political arm of debt management.²⁹ This is evident if we attempt to draw a parallel between the Genoese institution and the Venetian and Florentine debt systems. For example, the two Florentine systems of public debt, the *Monte* and floating debt, bear few similarities to the Genoese Bank of San Giorgio. The few who invested in floating debt in Florence acquired considerable political influence but the system never became a corporate body, while the *Monte* (the institution which managed the debt of the Florentine commune) always remained under government control.³⁰ In Venice, the Republic oversaw its own debt, which

29 Molho, "Città-stato," 210.

30 On the Florentine floating debt see Molho, *Florentine Public Finances*, and Barthas, *L'argent*, in particular the appendix. Molho envisaged the possibility of finding a case of

was sometimes paid off completely only to be reactivated in time of war.³¹ In Genoa, only the wealthiest creditors participated in the management of San Giorgio, while all Genoese citizens had the right to vote in the commune. Two fundamental characteristics of the Genoese institution help us understand how San Giorgio acquired such influence and authority: first, the fact that multiple debts were incorporated into a single institution, and second, the fact that its governance was autonomous and separate from the political authority of the Genoese commune.

The Casa di San Giorgio was established in 1407 during French rule in Genoa, which had begun in 1396. In 1401, the French governor Marshal Boucicaut defeated the popular (i.e., non-noble) forces who had established an opposition government (headed by Battista Boccanegra and Battista de Franchi-Luxardo) when the French had entered the city a few years before.³² After 1401, the traditional organization of the popular forces (which was based on the guilds) was dismantled. According to Sieveking, Boucicaut established the Bank of San Giorgio in the wake of this popular repression in order to finance crusading expeditions in the east. His government wished to consolidate the commune's debts since a number of contractors of the *compere* had never paid their debts and therefore many creditors had not received interest on their investments in the *compere*.³³ The management of the *compere* was accordingly transferred to the commune. Debtors were judged by communal magistrates, the *magistri rationales*, and account books were overseen by the commune's financial office, the *Officium monetae*.³⁴ In the early months of 1405, Pietro Grimaldi suggested appointing two *nobiles* and two *populares*, the *procuratores comperarum Sancti Georgii*, to oversee the reduction of the debt by purchasing debt securities. Four others were appointed "protectors" (*protectores*) and charged with the task of inspecting both contractors' revenues and creditors' investments. From 1412 onward, these eight officials, the *procuratores et protectores comperarum S. Georgii*, governed the institution. The process through which the *compere* were aggregated lasted many years. During a first phase, while San Giorgio was being established, only a few of the *compere* were aggregated.³⁵ From 1437 to

Genoese floating debt, but he noted that there are few traces of its existence (Molho, "Città-stato," 212).

31 Pezzolo, "Venetian Government Debt."

32 Cf. chap. 5, pp. 135–9.

33 Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*, 13.

34 Ibid.

35 *Compera regiminis*: 203,878 lire; the *Compera S. Petri*: 529,646 lire, 3 soldi, 8 denari; *Gazarie*: 132,859 lire, 2 soldi, 7 denari; *Nove S. Pauli*, 903,966 lire, 11 soldi, 5 denari; *Veteres* 1,021,009

1458 other *compere* were absorbed: in 1437 a few *compere* of low value, called *comperette*; in 1447 another five lesser *compere*; in 1454 the *Compere Capituli* and the *Compera Pacis*. In 1458 the *compera vini ed una sexte sale* (*compera* of [the taxes on] wine and salt) was consolidated. All *compere* were eventually transferred to San Giorgio except for the *compera vini*, also called the “*compera* of the *soldi* 2, *denari* 4.” Thus while San Giorgio was technically a private consortium, its gradual acquisition of all of the *compere* gradually made it the only place the commune could obtain a loan.

The institution established its headquarters in the Genoese customs house, the Palazzo San Giorgio (fig. 52); situated in the middle of the port, it had originally served as the communal palace or town hall.³⁶ During the fifteenth century, statues, busts, and cartouches honoring San Giorgio's chief donors were installed. In the years following its establishment, the institution's financial instruments, characteristics, and powers were gradually defined. Born as a system of communal debt administration, San Giorgio used *luoghi* (*loca*, shares in the debt) and the interest on them (*paghe*) as instruments, gradually assimilating the communal taxation system, which was organized around loans made to the commune. Parallel to its role in managing the commune's debt, and as a result of its constant management of the financial instruments relative to the administration of that debt, the institution developed other roles both financial (such as banking) and political (such as territorial sovereignty).

The Financial Characteristics of San Giorgio

The *gabelle* were indirect taxes which were generally established when each *compera* was instituted. *Gabelle* were mirrors of the *compere*, and therefore of the loans that the commune obtained from investors. Each loan was guaranteed by revenues from a tax, and therefore by a *gabella* itself. By acquiring almost all of the *compere*, therefore, San Giorgio automatically acquired almost all of the *gabelle*. Furthermore, during the fifteenth century new *gabelle* were introduced, all administered by San Giorgio. These *gabelle* provided San Giorgio with most of its revenues. When the institution was established, it acquired 44 *gabelle*; by 1539 San Giorgio possessed 75 of them, the most important of which were taxes on foreign commerce and on certain goods such as salt, wheat, and

lire, 7 *soldi*; Maona Cipri: 147,102 *lire*, 6 *soldi*, 8 *denari*; amounting to a total of 2,938,462 *lire*, 10 *soldi*, 4 *denari*: Sieveking, *Studio sulle finanze*, 18.

36 See chap. 9, pp. 230–32.

wine. Jacques Heers has estimated that during the fifteenth century revenue from the *gabelle* amounted to about 300,000 *lire* per annum.³⁷ Tax collection was not managed directly by the *compere* or by San Giorgio, however; the *compere* were subcontracted out to private investors. Over time the governors of San Giorgio came to prefer selling the *gabelle* a number of years in advance, so that San Giorgio received part of the total sum immediately; this enabled them to estimate in advance the returns that should be paid out to investors. Often the institution divided payments to its creditors into two, one paid in advance and one deferred; the advance payment was made using a money of account (the *lire di paghe*) while the deferred payment was made in cash.

The *luoghi* discussed above were thus part of the debt (*compera*) of the commune. It was customary to refer to the possession of *luoghi* not by indicating a number of *luoghi*, but as an amount in *lire*: an investor therefore possessed an amount of *lire di luoghi*. These amounts were written in San Giorgio's registers, called *cartolari delle colonne*, wherein one *colonna* (column) registered each person's amount of *lire di luoghi*. Each *luogo* yielded a certain amount of interest, called *paga* (payment; pl. *paghe*). The allocation of *paghe* was spread over time and varied greatly. Each time San Giorgio issued *luoghi*, these were acquired by private investors who often sold them to other investors on the secondary market. The *luoghi* could not be returned to San Giorgio; even shares belonging to individuals who had been exiled, or to those who had committed political crimes, could not be confiscated. This guaranteed the institution's stability and credibility, unencumbered by the commune's political turmoils. Many Genoese invested in *luoghi*, both private individuals and institutions (especially religious ones), committing their assets in exchange for secure returns. Even people outside Genoa invested in *luoghi*, both foreigners (such as the inhabitants of Asti) and Genoese who had migrated to other areas.³⁸

The value of the *luoghi* could fluctuate according to circumstance—for example, if Genoa was under foreign rule, if an internal faction (for example, a member of the Adorno or Fregoso family) came to power, or in the case of external political events that affected life in the city. Nevertheless, internal politics and international events influenced the value of the *luoghi* more than the value of their returns, the *paghe*. If the commune was in dire economic straits, new *luoghi* could be issued. This practice was sometimes forbidden or at least

37 GXV, 166.

38 Assini, "Documenti genovesi."

regulated, however, to avoid a situation in which shares did not correspond to *gabelle*.

While the system was based on investments in *luoghi*, the *paghe* (their returns) were more often used in day-to-day business; they played an important role in many financial practices and were often used as virtual money. As with the *luoghi*, the value of the *paghe* was often expressed in *lire*: namely, in *lire* of 20 *soldi* for each *paga*, which represented their nominal value (called *lire di numerato*). Under the financial governance of San Giorgio, the *paghe* were paid out in two different stages. First, they were assigned to the holders of *luoghi* simply by registering them in specific ledgers; this practice was referred to as *fare le scuse* (literally, to make one's excuses). The *lire* were then assigned to creditors according to a percentage on the nominal value of the *luoghi* (one hundred *lire* for each *luogo*). Profits initially averaged around 7% but gradually decreased, reaching about 2% by the end of the fifteenth century.³⁹

During the fifteenth century, even the maturity date of the *paghe* went from a fixed term to an extremely variable (sometimes very long) period, which was difficult to determine beforehand. Initially the term was fixed by law, but this regulation was not respected, and the payments for each installment were often deferred by several years: for example, the *paghe* maturing in 1453, 1454, and 1455 were each deferred by three years.⁴⁰ In 1460 an eighteen-month term was established for the payment of the first installment of the *paghe*, but to no avail: by the beginning of the sixteenth century payments were delayed by fifty months.⁴¹ Furthermore, when the *paghe* matured they were supposed to be paid in cash, but this principle remained theoretical rather than practical. In the time between the assignment of a *paga*, the *scuse*, and the *paga's* maturity, the *paga* could be sold and bought. The fifteenth-century ledgers of the *paghe* therefore contain thousands of transactions revealing that the *lire di paga* functioned as money of account. The regular delays in payment explain this staggering number of transactions: they prompted investors to sell the *paghe* which they could not yet claim, thereby creating a kind of virtual market space. The *paghe* which were exchanged were registered in *lire* and *soldi*.

39 From the beginning (1409) until 1420 the interest rate was around 7%; then it was about 5% up to the 1440s and 4% until 1463, when it decreased to 3%: Marengo et al., *Banco*, 253–4.

40 GXV, 165.

41 On the eighteen-month term and the fine: ASG, Membranacei 25, 12r. On the length of deferrals and some examples, see Felloni's inventory: http://www.lacasadisangiorgio.it/main.php?do=node&tag=4_4.

If the possessor waited for the *paghe* to mature, San Giorgio would pay 20 *soldi* in exchange for each *lira*, but before maturity, *paghe* only commanded a reduced price. This practice was suspected of being usurious, since these profits did not derive from investors' own work.⁴²

The price of the *lire* varied from week to week, and at times even from day to day. Specific categories of artisans were more active in the market of the *paghe*, for example the *sestieri* (silk workers and merchants). Together with merchants and artisans, there were also those who speculated on the reduced price of the *paghe*. San Giorgio outsourced the *gabelle* in advance to private subcontractors, the *gabellotti*, who could pay part of what was due in cash and part in *paghe*. As a consequence, when the time came for the *gabellotti* to make their payments to the institution, they tried to acquire as many *paghe* as possible on the secondary market. It was mainly through the activity of the *gabellotti*, therefore, that the *paghe* returned to the source: it was in San Giorgio's financial interest to withdraw them gradually from the market. At the end of the process, when the *paghe* matured, few of the original investors still possessed them. This is the main reason why, while in theory San Giorgio paid in cash 20 *soldi* per *lira di paga*, in practice San Giorgio reimbursed very few investors directly.⁴³ The longer the *paghe* remained on the market and the more they were exchanged, the more San Giorgio could earn: by considerably extending the time frame of the transactions, San Giorgio created a financial infrastructure that enabled the institution to receive cash in exchange for virtual money. The *paghe* system was important because it replaced San Giorgio's banking functions when the bank was closed.

San Giorgio as a Bank

San Giorgio performed banking functions, as a credit and deposit bank, between 1408 and 1444 and from 1530 until the institution was suppressed. Its banking role has been compared to that of a modern central bank.⁴⁴ Scholars have hypothesized that the bank was established due to the paucity of cash at the end of the fourteenth century.⁴⁵ Investors who opened an account in San Giorgio could perform banking operations without cash, for example, by paying someone else holding an account in the same ledgers. In order to perform

42 On the discounted sale of *paghe* and the papal bulls see Kirshner, "Moral Problem."

43 G.XV, 169.

44 Felloni, *Amministrazione ed etica*, 3.

45 Aerts, "Casa di San Giorgio."

a banking operation, an investor would issue an oral order or a note which the beneficiary would endorse to the officials of San Giorgio. Some account holders could also receive credits. Unlike Florence, where many account books have been preserved, the number of private banks and the volume of capital invested in fifteenth-century Genoa are unknown. Some of these private banks, however, kept their accounts in San Giorgio.⁴⁶ Thus San Giorgio was used by other banks as well as individuals and it probably performed the highest number of transactions of any Genoese institution.

Although the bank was suppressed in 1444, its operations did not cease completely. San Giorgio continued to perform banking functions through its public debt system by using the *paghe*, which consequently became a money of account. The registers of the *paghe* from this period are replete with different types of transactions. Originally suggested by Jacques Heers, the existence of this practice has been verified by other scholars but has never been adequately studied.⁴⁷

The Lands of San Giorgio

During the fifteenth century, as the commune was unable to repay its debts, San Giorgio gradually acquired numerous communal privileges and rights. This was not only a financial process; it was also territorial. Between 1446 and 1562 San Giorgio acquired and held numerous territories: the island of Corsica; the city of Famagusta on Cyprus; the town of Pieve di Teco, the city of Ventimiglia, and the port of Levanto (all in Liguria); Sarzana, Sarzanello, and Pietrasanta (in the Lunigiana, now part of Tuscany); as well as parts of the Crimea and along the coast of the Black Sea: Caffa (present-day Feodosia; figs. 79–80), Soldaia (Sudak; figs. 84–5), Cembalo (Balaklava; fig. 81), and Samastri (Amasra in northern Turkey). San Giorgio not only obtained these areas as possessions, but also gained unrestricted power over their territories and their inhabitants, defined as *plena iurisdictio* (full jurisdiction) and *ius gladii* (literally, “the right of the sword,” i.e. the right to inflict capital punishment). San Giorgio left widespread physical traces of its rule, particularly inscriptions, bas-reliefs, and statues representing its emblem of Saint George and the dragon. In the most distant territories in the east, San Giorgio used its banner to launch crusades

46 The archive of the Casa di San Giorgio also preserves the ledgers of a number of companies, for example the documents of the Lomellini company.

47 Assini, “L’importanza della contabilità.”

and peddle indulgences.⁴⁸ The territories which today bear San Giorgio's mark most visibly, however, are those nearest Genoa. The further away we get from Genoa and Liguria, the fewer traces of San Giorgio's dominion do we encounter. A few bas-reliefs and fortifications have survived in Ventimiglia and Lerici, in the Lunigiana, and on the Tyrrhenian islands of Corsica and Capraia. On the other hand, scant vestiges remain of San Giorgio's presence in the ancient city of Caffa in the Crimea (now Feodosia) and at Famagusta on Cyprus. All territories were acquired between 1446 and 1518, but not all of the territories remained continuously under San Giorgio's rule: Famagusta was lost in 1464, Caffa and the areas in Crimea in 1475, while Corsica—the largest of the institution's territories—was lost to it in 1453, passing between 1464 and 1483 into the hands of the Sforza who during those years had established their *signoria* over Genoa.

The officials of San Giorgio were not always interested in acquiring territory; in certain cases the commune had to pressure the institution to accept it, while in other cases San Giorgio was encouraged to take action because the danger of losing a Genoese territory was high, or else because the possession and governance of a particular area was financially convenient. In fact, San Giorgio did not always have to purchase its acquisitions: in most cases, it was the commune that handed over the territory to San Giorgio to avoid the expense of managing it. Territory after territory and over the course of many years, San Giorgio's practices of governance and control became increasingly complex: its governors were entrusted with political and administrative power over each territory; armies were organized when necessary; a formulary for writing contracts was drawn up; artists were employed to create the emblems of San Giorgio that were needed to mark their territory. Despite the conscious collaboration of the commune and San Giorgio regarding government offices and practices, other offices, practices, and traditions specific to San Giorgio were gradually created and accumulated. Even from a legal perspective, San Giorgio developed its own policies; the most evident case is the writing of the contracts establishing San Giorgio's *ius gladii* and *plena iurisdictio* over its territories.⁴⁹

In the early years of the sixteenth century Niccolò Machiavelli wrote that San Giorgio had acquired "most of the lands and cities of the Genoese empire."⁵⁰

48 ASG, San Giorgio, 185,02049 (*Introitus* and *exitus* of 1453), 336v: 7 *lire* and 4 *soldi*.

49 Pietrasanta was the first territory to be made subject to San Giorgio, but I have found no evidence of a contract granting it this territory in either the Genoese archives or the Archivio Storico del Comune di Pietrasanta.

50 Machiavelli, *Opere storiche*, 2.762.

From a quantitative perspective Machiavelli's statement is certainly true: by the second half of the fifteenth century, out of all Genoese territories outside Liguria, only the island of Chios (which was controlled by the *Mahona*), and the islands of the Gattilusio family in the eastern Mediterranean remained outside the jurisdiction of San Giorgio. Although there is no comprehensive survey of the wealth or demographic density of these territories, if we consider merely the vast expanses of land San Giorgio possessed on Corsica, it is nonetheless clear that the institution's dominions were much more extensive than the commune's.

Most of these territories were not inhabited by Genoese citizens, but by a single subject population, such as on Corsica, or else by a more diverse population, as for example in Famagusta and Caffa. Formally none of these territories was a colony, but some have been defined as colonies because of their distance from Genoa.⁵¹ Similarly, although San Giorgio's terrestrial and maritime dominions were inhabited and visited by a multitude of individuals of different origins, they underwent similar transformations. Apart from its possessions in Liguria and the Lunigiana, the legal framework of which closely resembled that of the Genoese commune, what distinguished San Giorgio's sovereignty over Corsica, Cyprus or Crimea? Why has Crimea been defined a colony while Corsica not?

San Giorgio tried to implement a homogeneous system of policies in the various territories under its control: transforming the landscape, founding cities, building ports and defensive systems, and (in larger areas like Corsica) even establishing plantations. The legislative framework, political customs, and military protocols they applied derived from a common tradition, since these had been established in Genoa by the same regulations, and the governors of San Giorgio tried to apply them uniformly in their various dominions. In some of the territories—for example, in Famagusta and on Corsica—the sovereignty of San Giorgio had been preceded by that of the commune and could be traced back to the period of the *Mahone*.

San Giorgio's system of administration for its territories was highly sophisticated. Like other expenses, each territorial possession became an item in its financial accounts. The institution's deposit and withdrawal ledgers (*introitus et exitus*), therefore, also include these dominions.⁵² These sources are interesting not only because they contain the most important expenses made for the territories, but also because of the terminology they use to

51 Balard, "Il Banco." See the discussion of the issues surrounding the idea of "colony" in chap. 18, pp. 496–500.

52 http://www.lacasadisangiorgio.it/main.php?do=node&tag=2_2_188.

describe such expenses: *dominium Caffae*, *inceptum Corsicae*, and *expenses Sarzanae* are recurrent items.⁵³ A series of account ledgers for each territory have also been preserved: here expenses are recorded without interruption in numerous registers for the entire period of San Giorgio's rule.⁵⁴ The registers contain war expenses—soldiers' stipends, outlays for gunpowder and ambassadors—as well as the general costs of territorial administration, such as for the construction of fortifications. This series of documents is structurally cohesive and each expense can be traced from the main accounts of San Giorgio to the specific series which contains more detail about it. This system cannot be compared to the one used by the Genoese commune, for which no such source survives, except for the registers of the *massaria*. Neither the Genoese commune (before 1528) nor the Republic of Genoa (after 1528) produced registers of territorial accounts comparable in accuracy to the documentation produced by San Giorgio.⁵⁵ Indeed, perhaps no other territorial power of the Italian Renaissance—even extensively bureaucratic ones like Florence or Venice—devised such elaborate and accurate systems of accounting as did San Giorgio.

Most probably, the system of financial accounting used to keep track of financial investments in debt (the *colonne* of the *luoghi*, the ledgers of the *paghe*) was also used to record territorial expenses, even though the goals of the two activities were different. The scribes of San Giorgio tracked shares (*paghe* and *luoghi*) because their owners had to be paid, or because some record of who possessed those shares was needed in case of litigation. Full traceability of San Giorgio's operations enabled the virtual use of money: this was its institutional strength. Probably by transferral, then, its accounts system was also used to track expenses in San Giorgio's territorial dominions. The territories acquired by San Giorgio represent the culmination of the process through which the commune alienated its own rights and powers, and demonstrate how San Giorgio came to compete with the Genoese commune.

The institutions analyzed in this chapter were widespread across Italy and the Mediterranean: although the Casa di San Giorgio was unique, systems of debt existed beyond Genoa, for example in Florence and Venice. *Commenda/accomandita* contracts were common, and *Mahone* also existed outside Genoa, albeit to a lesser extent. While the preceding pages have

53 ASG, San Giorgio, *Introitus* and *exitus* of 1484, 61v.

54 For the period 1484–1562, there are 88 volumes (both ledgers and cartularies) containing only the expenses for the territory of Sarzana: ASG, Pandetta 18.

55 For Corsica, for example, there are eight extant subseries, covering (among other things) the buildings accounts for each city and expenses for military parades.

discussed why Genoese financial and commercial institutions have received so much attention from scholars from the nineteenth century onward, we must also recall that this historiographical emphasis on commercial precocity developed in parallel with the myth of Genoese political instability. Medieval and early modern Genoa has been described as a city ridden with factional and political discord, in stark contrast to the well-regulated Venetian republic or the well-studied Florentine state.⁵⁶

We may therefore attempt to answer a few of the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter: Genoese financial and commercial institutions were extremely precocious, but thanks to the expansion of the Genoese merchants' activities, these institutions spread throughout many Mediterranean areas and even beyond Europe. We might also hypothesize that Genoa's focus on commerce and finance allowed it to function as a sort of bridge between the Arabic-Muslim world and the northern coast of the Mediterranean, bringing to Europe (and later developing) a number of institutions originally created in the Middle East and north Africa—areas with well-established economic and financial cultures predating similar developments in Europe. Only the Casa di San Giorgio must be excluded from this picture since it was unprecedented and similar contemporary institutions are not attested. Nonetheless, it is significant because over the course of time, especially in the early modern period, it came to be connected to other types of institutions typical of northern Europe, especially Britain and the Netherlands: corporations or joint stock companies. According to recently-discovered data, as well as a number of late nineteenth-century German scholars, the Casa di San Giorgio—with its financial structure combining shares, a public bank, and debt with the possession of territorial dominions, was known and studied even by the founders of these early modern financial corporations.⁵⁷

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58 Felloni's inventory is fundamental for the study of the archives of the Casa di San Giorgio.

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Mediterranean Rivalries

Thomas Kirk

During the centuries covered by this volume a great deal of interaction both among individuals and among more or less organized groups took the form of conflict. Medieval Genoa, of course, was no exception. This chapter will focus on those conflicts that were played out on the sea (see maps 1–2). While a number of such conflictual encounters could easily fall into the category of naval warfare, that label does not always describe the historical experience of those involved, nor was it a well-defined mental category of the historical actors. Placing emphasis on rivalries rather than warfare broadens our field of enquiry beyond warfare, allowing us to explore the driving forces and underlying tensions that often erupted into violence. It also provides an opportunity to reconstruct some of the subtle complexities of life in medieval Genoa.

Having thus cast the net more widely, we must distinguish between separate, yet related phenomena: rivalries, conflict and warfare. Rivalries existed at all levels of society. Within Genoa individuals and groups were locked into struggles for enhanced prestige, for political power and for commercial success. The same could be said of larger factions within the city, or even of the medieval city-states themselves. In other words, just as exponents of prominent families vied for prestige, or clans and factions sought power, so too did the Genoese commune seek greater prestige, political influence or commercial power over its principal rivals. At each of these levels such rivalries led to conflict, which in turn often manifested itself in the form of violence or the threat of violence at sea. While the struggles for influence and supremacy among the myriad groupings within Genoese society form the backdrop of nearly all the contributions to the present volume, the sea represents a very special arena in the history of Genoa.

Genoa owed its livelihood, even its very existence, to the sea. The original Bronze-Age settlement on the site of what is now Piazza Brignole was a port at the mouth of the Bisagno River (map 6), giving the city its name. *Genova*, *Zena*, and *Genoa* appear to descend from the Celto-Ligurian *Genaua* or *Gena*, meaning “mouth,” as in the mouth of a river.¹ The city’s dramatic rise

1 Bompani, “Scoperto il segreto.” See chaps. 3, pp. 73–4, and 9, pp. 220–21, on Genoa’s early urban development.

to prominence, however, began much later, during the centuries of upheaval following the collapse of the Roman Empire and the subsequent ebb and flow of states and statelets seeking to control northern Italy and access to the Mediterranean Sea.

The city's maritime vocation also lay at the heart of civic identity. Among the earliest historical memories is the role assigned the city by the Carolingians to "defend the seas and islands of Italy against the Saracens."² In his *Castigatissimi annali* of 1537, Agostino Giustiniani presents the sack of Genoa at the hands of Fatimid raiders in 934 or 935 and an apparently fictitious reprisal as pivotal in spurring an ever-expanding presence on the sea, while the annalist Caffaro famously places Genoese involvement in the earliest phases of the Crusades at the beginning of his chronicle and thus literally of Genoese history.³ The sea also represented Genoa's lifeblood, its livelihood. As a Neolithic fishing village, a modest Roman port, an outpost of Byzantium, or the launching point of audacious commercial and military ventures, Genoa and the Genoese were defined by their relationship with the sea and from it drew power, prestige, and most of all, great wealth. Given the overwhelming importance of the Mediterranean for the Genoese, the myriad internal divisions that chronically racked the city were usually set aside in the maritime space. Conflict with other cities and tensions between Christendom and Islam usually trumped local rivalries. Especially when shared commercial interests were at stake, the Genoese could tenuously patch together a degree of unity in order to face a common foe.

This chapter will first map out the layers of divisions running through Genoese society, among the maritime cities of western Christendom, and finally through the larger Mediterranean. Commercial rivalries will be dealt with separately as they do not always coincide with the other fault lines crisscrossing the Mediterranean world. Attention will then be shifted to the forces and interests that tended to have a multiplying effect on tension along such lines—in other words, the factors that could cause any latent conflict to erupt. A lengthy final section will then examine evolving maritime technology and ship types as well as key naval campaigns that illustrate the broader mechanisms at the base of sea-borne conflict, and the strategies, tactics, strengths and limits of medieval navies and naval powers.

² *CARG*, fol. xxv, verso.

³ On the Muslim sack of Genoa: chap. 3, pp. 86–7; on Caffaro: chap. 1, p. 37, and 11, pp. 323–5.

Intramural Rivalries

As with virtually all the Italian communes, the absence of a strong central authority left ample room for various historical actors and groups to vie for control of the community. Such groups usually formed along family or clan lines. This is no surprise; common lineage was and is one of the strongest constituents of identity. While in many of the emerging city-states of the Italian peninsula a single family was able to obtain supremacy, usually legitimated through the authority of the Holy Roman Emperor, no single family or clan was able to establish lasting control over Genoa. Thus, a *de facto* balance of power dictated a degree of cooperation in overseeing the affairs of state. As the institutional structure of the commune evolved the city-state began to extend the geographical reach of its power, coopting or subduing both smaller towns and the nobility that had henceforth controlled the surrounding countryside. Overseas adventures also led to an influx of wealth, accelerating economic development in the city.

Lasting divisions, or rather lasting labels, emerged. The composition of the groups themselves showed some fluidity, but early boundaries proved to be surprisingly long-lived. The most visible of these fractures was that between *nobili* and *popolari*, nobles and commoners. In the complex urban environment of medieval Genoa, however, this was not simply a horizontal division based on clearly defined social classes. Many members of the feudal nobility were thoroughly urbanized and active in trade, while the appellation of “noble” was also afforded to anyone who had served on the Council of Elders or who had held the office of consul, regardless of his origin.⁴ By the second half of the eleventh century the urbanized feudal nobles involved in commerce, together with a mercantile elite of more humble extraction, forged the first proto-communal government of the city, the *compagna*. In all likelihood this entity was modelled along the lines of private commercial organizations and was able to impress some sort of collective seal on the expeditions to the eastern Mediterranean within the context of the early crusading movement.⁵

Recognition of a counterpart to the urban “nobility,” the *popolari*, dates to 1257. In explicit contrast to the previous regime the “people” or “commoners” proclaimed Guglielmo Boccanegra *capitano del popolo* (“captain of the people”) in that year. The *popolari*, however, were no more coherent than the *nobili* and Boccanegra’s experiment collapsed in 1262.⁶ In the ensuing

4 Vitale, *Breviario*, 17.29.

5 Polonio, “Dalla marginalità,” 27–8.

6 Ibid., 34.

struggles between the two factions, there was a degree of fluidity. Attempts were made to exclude the feudal aristocracy from power and several families of the urban *nobili* of commoner extraction chose to accept exclusion from power rather than join the *popolari*. This led to a distinction made among the *nobili*: on the one hand the *quattro casate*—the great houses or clans of the Doria, Spinola, Fieschi and Grimaldi, all of whom initially drew their power from landed estates and feudal titles in the Genoese hinterland—and on the other hand the *tetti appesi*, or hangers-on who had thrown in their lot with the older nobility during the struggles between *nobili* and *popolari*. Simone Boccanegra's decision to allot half of all offices to nobles, reiterated in 1363 and 1394, institutionalized and consequently crystallized the division between the two factions.⁷ The *popolari* were no more united. A 1363 law sanctioned the division between *mercanti* and *artesi*, merchants and artisans.⁸

Independently of the division between *nobili* and *popolari* delineated above, over the course of the thirteenth century Guelf and Ghibelline parties, or *Rampini* and *Mascherati* as they were known locally, coalesced in Genoa and Liguria.⁹ Fuelled as much by personal rivalry and social friction as by preferences in foreign policy and ideology, within Genoa these groups were fluid. The struggles between Guelfs and Ghibellines, however, were more deeply felt along the Rivas. The division was longest lasting in the eastern Riviera di Levante, given the influence of the Fieschi (Guelf stalwarts) and their numerous possessions in the Apennines. To the west, however, in the Riviera di Ponente, the general defeat of the Guelf cause was followed by infighting between the two principal Ghibelline houses, the Doria and the Spinola.¹⁰

One final division emerged within Genoa and Genoese-held territories during the fourteenth century. The position of head of state, the doge, became the preserve of four families among the *popolari* known as the *cappellazzi*: Adorno, Fregoso, Guarco, and Montaldo. The political rivalry among these four families, primarily between the Adorno and the Fregoso, led to the creation of a further layer of factional division.¹¹

To bring the discussion back to the main focus of this chapter, though, until the sixteenth century the internal divisions lacerating Genoese society

7 Petti Balbi, *Simon Boccanegra*, 34–5; Foglietta, *Della Repubblica*, 30–31.

8 Bitossi, *Il governo*, 33.

9 Polonio, “Dalla marginalità,” 33–4. On Genoese families' parallel holdings in Genoa, Liguria, and internationally, see chaps. 2, pp. 67–9, and 18, pp. 501, 506, and 509–10.

10 Musso, “Tirannia,” 44–5.

11 On factionalism in Genoa and its links to regional and peninsular conflicts, see chap. 5, esp. pp. 134–40.

rarely extended to the maritime space. Nonetheless, the effects of internal strife did condition the actions of Genoese citizens in their overseas adventures. Following their decisive naval victory over the Venetians at the Battle of Curzola in 1298, for example, the Genoese under Lamba Doria were unable to follow up on their victory with an attack on Venice because Doria feared the Genoese Guelfs based in Monaco would attack Genoa itself in his absence.¹² Likewise, during the first half of the fifteenth century the Visconti lords of Genoa were not able to take full advantage of Genoa's naval resources in their struggles with Aragon due to the resistance of the Fieschi and the Fregoso, Genoese families allied with Florence and Venice against the duke of Milan.¹³

The seemingly endless array of divisions within the social fabric of Genoa thus provides a backdrop for the larger scale rivalries entered into by this emerging Mediterranean power. As mentioned above, the internal rivalries rarely played themselves out explicitly in the realm of maritime conflict, but they did always form the context for decisions regarding expansionist strategies and escalating trade rivalries to open organized conflict.

Rivalries in the Mediterranean World

Examining the expansion of Genoese activities into broader geographical regions beyond the confines of the city itself or its Ligurian domains, complicated relationships with a variety of powers spring immediately to our attention. We will examine the western Mediterranean first, as the foreground of Genoese maritime activity. An examination of the Genoese role in the affairs of the eastern Mediterranean will follow. Naturally, Genoa was not the only power active in any of these spheres of activity and relations had to be forged with competing entities. Such relationships were often cooperative, but just as often they were conflictual. The two aspects were not necessarily mutually exclusive. If nothing else they were in constant flux; cooperation led to conflict over trading privileges or the spoils of war, while hostility could be a means for forcing future cooperation. Before turning to the topic of open warfare, we will examine these relationships of cooperation and conflict, rivalries among collective historical actors.

No Genoese records survive from before the sack of the city at the hands of Fatimid Muslim raiders from Tunisia in 934 or 935, so the little that we do know about the city prior to the tenth century is either inferred from disparate

12 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.94–5. See also Dotson, “Venice, Genoa, and Control,” 127.

13 Musso, “Tirannia,” 51; also chap. 5, pp. 132–7.

sources or is conjecture.¹⁴ Some evidence suggests that Genoa was part of long-distance trading networks even during the Ostrogothic period,¹⁵ while the Genoese historian Vito Vitale hypothesizes that Genoa's importance as a regional center was due to its inclusion in the *Provincia maritima Italorum* during the century of Byzantine control (AD 537–642) prior to conquest by the Lombards. Vitale suggests that Genoa's position as a frontier outpost of the Byzantine Empire must have been accompanied by the creation of a free Genoese fleet and a flourishing economy.¹⁶ The sixteenth-century annalist Agostino Giustiniani imagined Genoa as a precocious naval power already in the early ninth century when a "powerful Genoese fleet" supposedly conquered Corsica on behalf of Pepin, king of Italy.¹⁷ Giustiniani's assertions, though, must be read more in terms of a justification of Genoese control over Corsica rather than a historically accurate account of events. In all probability Genoa's role in the Carolingian realms was one of protecting specific stretches of coastline.¹⁸ Most likely, the city established an enduring presence in the waters of the Mediterranean only in the aftermath of the tenth-century sack of Genoa.

According to the eminent historian of Genoa Roberto Lopez, the Fatimid attack was the catalyst that sparked Genoa's rapid rise. As the Genoese sought to avenge the sack of the city by preying on Muslim shipping, they accumulated through piracy the capital necessary for arming fleets and entering Mediterranean commerce on their own terms.¹⁹ Steven Epstein has pointed out that most of the early merchant families in Genoa had noble origins and were therefore in a position to accumulate funds through agriculture and then reinvest them in piracy or commerce (he rightly points out that even piracy requires start-up capital).²⁰ Maritime activity as a reaction to the sack of Genoa explains both the militant nature of Genoese religious devotion and its open hostility towards Muslim states—which did not, however, keep the Genoese from maintaining commercial relations with Muslims from a very early date.

Venturing into the western Mediterranean, all of the powers with a presence at sea were rivals, potential partners, and often enemies. Naturally, the first of these were Muslims. Whether the initial drive behind Genoa's rise as a

14 Cf. chaps. 3, pp. 72–4, and 14, p. 399.

15 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.3; Lopez, *Commercial Revolution*, 60–62.

16 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.3–4.

17 *CARG*, fol. xxxv, verso.

18 Polonio, "Dalla marginalità," 25.

19 Lopez, "Aux origines."

20 *G&G*, 24–6.

sea power was one of vengeance for the city's tenth-century sack, or simply a desire for gain, entering the western Mediterranean meant either conflict with the Muslim states of Spain and North Africa, or trade with them, or both. Meanwhile, Pisa was Genoa's principal Christian rival. A nearby Italian city with similar aspirations, Pisa was a natural ally of Genoa, but also a natural threat to the city-state's interests, and eventually a mortal enemy.

There is some documentary evidence that Genoese shippers and merchants had found their way as far afield as Alexandria in Egypt by the mid-eleventh century,²¹ but it was with their involvement in the Crusades that the Genoese presence in the eastern Mediterranean became ponderous.²² Here their natural partners were the newly formed crusader states, and their natural rivals were those competing for the same goods, trading networks, and privileges: Pisa once more, and Venice. Access to the most lucrative trades passed through the Muslim powers of the Levant and the Byzantine Empire, both of whom were essential commercial partners. Muslim Egypt was formally the enemy of the crusader states and the West in general, but the Genoese were much more likely to enter into conflict with their Italian rivals. Genoa's approach to the Byzantines, too, was shaped by its rivalry with Venice.

Conflict

Any rivalry could escalate into open conflict. Commercial rivalries in particular were the principal source of conflict. Questions of prestige could also escalate to violence, but were much more likely to do so when economic interests were at stake. For example, a quarrel over ceremonial precedence between representatives of Genoa and Venice at the coronation of Peter II of Cyprus (1372) led to the fourth war between the two Italian cities.²³ This surely would not have led to open warfare had not the Genoese wanted to dislodge the Venetians from their possessions in the eastern Mediterranean and eliminate competition along the most lucrative trade routes.

Economic interests could lead to violence in a number of different ways: first of all, plunder and piracy.²⁴ This, of course, can easily exist as a stand-alone activity. Piracy against Muslim shipping seems to lie at the origins of

21 G&G, 24; Polonio, "Dalla marginalità," 27.

22 See chap. 17 for an extensive discussion of Genoa's involvement in the Crusades, and chap. 18 for its effects on Genoese trade and settlement patterns.

23 Dotson, "Venice, Genoa, and Control," 130.

24 On the reputation of the Genoese as pirates, see chap. 8, pp. 193–4.

the Genoese rise and remained a constant throughout the medieval period. As commercial relations were formalized, however, indiscriminate piracy waned in the interests of keeping trade open. Furthermore, in times of warfare, plundering the vessels of one's opponents was always an ancillary to state-sponsored hostilities: in order to undermine the enemy's financial capabilities, and to extend one's own economic and political spheres of interest. The Genoese annals overflow with examples of precisely this type of hostility, which is no less glorified than great fleet actions: small numbers of vessels plundering isolated enemy ships or unwary convoys. The earliest Genoese source, the annals of Caffaro, describe the repeated wars against Pisa in terms of ships captured and booty plundered.²⁵ The war of 1119–20 is typical in this respect. The only potential fleet engagement was a bloodless one, in which the Pisans capitulated when an overwhelming Genoese fleet appeared before their city. The only actual fighting mentioned is summed up as follows: "some Pisans were captured near Gozo with great riches."²⁶ Likewise, Caffaro describes the actions of 1127 as "continually taking galleys, ships, men and booty," and that of 1129 with the capture of a Pisan vessel whose cargo subsequently sold for 10,000 *lire*.²⁷ Peace with Pisa was reached in 1133 and the Genoese immediately directed their attention towards attacking Muslim shipping, first with the capture of a "big and rich ship" near Bugia (now Bèjaïa, Algeria) in 1136, then harassing shipping near Almería the following year, "returning to Genoa victorious with great booty."²⁸ As a final telling example, Caffaro describes the successful war against Pisa of 1162. He proudly sums the war up saying: "Let it be known to all that the Genoese (...) captured many Pisans and great riches, together with galleys, in their waters, and killed some of the more eminent among them, while the others, together with the booty, were brought back prisoners to Genoa."²⁹

Force or the threat of violence could also be used to open markets. Genoese involvement in the capture of Antioch during the First Crusade famously netted them a colony and base of operations within that city and access to the caravan routes of Syria.³⁰ Several colonies or trading outposts in the Levant were obtained in exchange for Genoese naval support.³¹ An 1104 treaty between Genoa and King Baldwin I of Jerusalem granted the Genoese tax exemptions

25 On the Genoese annals, see chap. 1, pp. 37–8.

26 AGC for 1119, 1.16. All translations are my own.

27 AGC for 1127 and 1129, 1.24.

28 AGC for 1136–7, 1.28–29.

29 AGC for 1162, 1.67.

30 Rose, *Naval Warfare*, 101.

31 For an examination of the Genoese colonial network, see chap. 18, pp. 506–13.

and property rights in Jaffa, Arsuf, Caesarea and Acre.³² In 1143 Genoese galleys assaulted Montpellier, a rival port attempting to establish a free commune. They handed the city back to William VI of Montpellier in exchange for one thousand silver marks, a *fondaco*, exemption from duties in William's lands, and a stipulation that merchants from Montpellier would not be allowed to sail to the east.³³ Perhaps most clamorously, though, the Venetians hijacked the Fourth Crusade, overthrowing the Byzantine Empire in 1204 and establishing trading colonies and supply posts around the Aegean, while fifty-seven years later Genoese support for Michael VIII Palaiologos in his reconquest of the empire opened not only Constantinople, but the entire Black Sea. By committing themselves to lending naval support to Palaiologos the Genoese gained access to the *termini* of overland routes to central and eastern Asia, as well as rights to exploit the alum reserves of Phocaea and export mastic from Chios.³⁴

Curiously, the reverse of this strategy could also prevail. During a power vacuum left by the death of Bohemond of Tripoli in 1287, the city declared itself a free commune and appealed to Genoa for protection. Genoa in turn sent Benedetto Zaccaria with two galleys. He stipulated an agreement with the Tripolitans granting Genoa sovereignty over the city with a right to nominate a *podestà* in exchange for Genoese promises of protection against any Muslim or Christian enemies. Genoa, however, did not reinforce the city. Occupying Tripoli would almost certainly have brought Genoa into open conflict with Mamluk Egypt, which was then consolidating its control over the region. The Genoese had extensive commercial interests in Egypt and did not want to risk exposing their merchants and goods to the inevitable reprisals that would accompany a war. Thus, while violence or the threat of violence could be used to open new markets, when those markets were already open and established it was the commercial interests that deterred conflict.³⁵

Once markets had been forced open and trading routes established, naval power was used to police those markets and routes. Caffaro again provides examples. On their return voyage the galleys whose crews had helped capture Montpellier captured a "pirate" galley. The next year (1144) an expedition was sent to the waters of Provence to capture a "pirate" *saetta* that "was preying on the Genoese." The pirates' eyes were gouged out.³⁶ Caffaro clearly tells the

32 Rose, *Naval Warfare*, 101; also discussed in chap. 17, pp. 475–6.

33 AGC for 1143, 1.31–32.

34 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.108–9; Polonio, "Dalla marginalità," 35–6; Dotson, "Venice, Genoa, and Control," 121–2.

35 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.92.

36 AGC for 1143–4, 1.31–32.

victor's tale; the Genoese had successfully subdued a rival and established a privileged merchant colony there. One can only wonder whether the Provençals called the Genoese "pirates."³⁷

Finally, force was used to deter, impede, or destroy competition. This is usually marked by escalation to large-scale warfare. The eleventh and twelfth centuries witnessed repeated Genoese involvement in open warfare. The city sent forces to subdue communities along the Ligurian coast, precociously building a territorial state;³⁸ fleets against Muslim powers in Sardinia, North Africa and Almería; as well as expeditions to the Levant in support of the Crusades. The greatest and most sustained efforts, however, were reserved for Genoa's Christian commercial maritime rivals: Pisa and Venice. Before examining these protracted struggles and the strategies, tactics and goals associated with them, though, it is time we turned our attention to the instruments of naval warfare, the ships used to fight at sea.

Maritime Technology

In the broadest of terms there were two basic ship types at use throughout the medieval Mediterranean: oared vessels and sailing vessels. Among ships driven by oars, the galley or *galea sottile* is the best known, although there were many variations—brigantines, galiots, *panfili*, and *saette* in particular, the main difference being size and the number of benches for oarsmen. Each ship was built individually under the direction of a master builder, or *maestro d'ascia*, without any sort of blueprint. So, while each vessel shares the general characteristics of the type, no two ships would have shared identical dimensions. The builder would lay out the keel first, to which a quarter-circle *ruota* would be attached at each end. From this a skeletal structure would be built, with the outside planking attached to the frame, as opposed to the northern "clinker-built" vessels where each row of planking is attached to the next and structural supports are added in a later phase.³⁹ Generally speaking, the length fore to aft of a galley was eight times its beam or breadth. A typical Mediterranean galley of the thirteenth century would have been roughly forty meters long, then, with a beam of around five meters. Having a draft of only one and a half meters, the single deck would ride less than a meter above the water line. A rectangular superstructure, the *telaio*, was fitted to the hull housing the rowing

37 See the discussion at the beginning of chap. 8.

38 Polonio, "Dalla marginalità," 28–33; see also chap. 2 of this volume.

39 Campodonico, *Navi e marinai*, 39, 43.

chamber, as well as the oars and tholepins. Typically, the *telaio* would extend roughly one meter beyond the outer limits of the hull and would provide space for thirty pairs of oars with sixty oarsmen (seated two to a bench) on each side of the vessel. Running the length of the *telaio* along the center of the vessel was the *corsia*, a walkway allowing soldiers and sailors to move quickly about the ship. A mast roughly four times the ship's beam was raised in the forward section of the galley, one-third of the way from bow to stern. A triangular lateen sail was mounted to the antenna, or yard, which was longer than the height of the mast. Two large oars, one on either side of the vessel, steered it.⁴⁰

Typically such a vessel would carry a crew of 120 oarsmen and another forty to fifty soldiers and sailors, all of whom would sleep on deck under awnings. In battle not only the awnings but also the mast and sail would be removed. Unlike ancient fighting vessels, the medieval galley did not have a ram at the bow. Instead, the bow *ruota* was surmounted with a "spur," a raised platform extending from the bow, angling slightly upwards. The primary goal in battle was not to sink the enemy vessel, but to capture it. The function of the ram had been to punch a hole in the enemy ship's hull below the water line, which would lead to the loss of the ship, its cargo, and possibly its crew. The spur, on the other hand, could be run onto the deck of an enemy ship in a deliberate collision, providing a bridge for boarding the opponent's vessel. Galleys often carried catapults at the bow and a number of slingers and cross-bowmen, but battles were decided in hand-to-hand combat. Ships could not be captured, their cargoes could not be plundered, and their crews could not be taken prisoner (for ransom) without boarding and subduing the enemy crew.

The basic form of the galley changed little over the course of the centuries, evolution being marked mainly by an increase in size. By the late thirteenth century most galleys mounted two masts rather than one and an increasing number of galleys were being built as triremes rather than biremes, that is, the number of oarsmen per bench was increased from two to three.⁴¹ By the late fifteenth century most galleys had a central, sternpost-mounted rudder rather than a pair of steering oars. Eventually the introduction of gunpowder artillery would lead to changes in galley design, but those changes were only beginning to be felt by the end of the fifteenth century. Before the sixteenth century, galleys mounting cannon would carry a single large gun aimed forward from the

40 Rodgers, *Naval Warfare under Oars*, 110–11.

41 Dotson, "Venice, Genoa, and Control," 123. It should be noted that the terminology is different for ancient and medieval vessels: classical biremes had two levels and triremes three, but by the eleventh century at the latest the word had come to refer to the number of oarsmen per bench.

bow of the ship. The first guns used were iron breech-loaders, but with time these were replaced by much larger and more accurate bronze muzzle-loading cannon.⁴²

As a warship, the galley had a number of advantages over larger and slower sailing vessels. The galleys' long, narrow hull made it fast while oared propulsion meant that they were always able to sail, even in the doldrums (still water) or with unfavorable winds. Their speed and maneuverability always gave them the option of accepting or abandoning battle with a sailing vessel, while their larger crew meant a greater number of fighting men and therefore greater fighting capacity in an age when naval combat was primarily hand-to-hand fighting. Their shallow draft also allowed galleys to sail up rivers and to land soldiers close in to shore.

On the other hand, galleys' low cargo capacity and large crews placed significant limits on their use and utility. Galley fleets could not operate far from friendly bases simply because they could not carry enough food and water for their large crews to survive at sea for extended periods of time. It is essential to understand this when examining the strategies adopted by the Italian maritime powers as they built commercial networks and colonial empires throughout the Mediterranean. Galley fleets required regularly spaced outposts along their routes. The high operating costs dictated by such large crews coupled with the relative lack of cargo space on galleys meant that only goods with very high value-to-weight ratios could be profitably carried aboard them. On the other hand, the same large crews made the galley the safest means of transport for high-value cargoes.

The other broad category of vessels were sailing ships. There was a great deal more variety of ship types and designs among sailing vessels than among oared ones. There was also much more development over the course of the medieval period. The nomenclature of the various ship types is often confusing since many sources refer to all sailing vessels with a single word, or distinguish types only by size. Some sources refer to all sailing ships as "cogs," or *cocche*, even long after that ship type had been superseded. *Navis*, *nave* (simply, "ship") is another common term.

In the earliest part of our period the largest sailing vessels were "round ships," descendants of Roman cargo ships. With hull proportions of roughly three to two, length to beam, it is not difficult to understand why they were called roundships. These unwieldy vessels rode high out of the water with a curved bow and stern, one or two masts carrying either a single lateen or, later,

42 Sicking, "Naval Warfare," 241.

square sail each. A long curved oar mounted on the stern quarter, or a pair of such oars, one on each side, steered the ship.⁴³

Crusaders from northern Europe introduced a new ship type to the Mediterranean, the cog or *cocca*. Originating in the Baltic region, this type of vessel had a flat keel and straight bow and stern posts. The ship was not built from a skeletal structure, but rather by fastening a row of planks to the keel, then another row of planks to the first and so on until the hull was complete. Internal ribs were fitted to increase the strength of the hull, but only after the ship had taken shape. Cogs mounted a sternpost rudder and were rigged with square sails.⁴⁴ While not as efficient at harnessing the wind as a lateen sail, square sails required fewer men to manage and allowed ships to tack more easily into the wind. The proportions of the cog, too, the length being roughly three times the beam, made the cog more stable and maneuverable than the roundships of the Mediterranean.

Exposure to the square-rigged cog sparked a period of rapid development for sailing ships in the Mediterranean, leading eventually to the development of the carrack, which made its appearance in the fourteenth century. The carrack shared the hull proportions, sternpost rudder and square rigging of the cog, but was much larger. Most cogs had a displacement of roughly 150 tons, the largest being around 200 tons. By the early fifteenth century the Genoese were building carracks with displacements between 500 and 1000 tons, and occasionally even 1500 tons. Carracks had multiple decks and multiple masts, three or even four, and were square-rigged except for the mizzen mast (the mast nearest the stern of the vessel), which usually mounted a lateen sail. The fore mast and main mast could carry two or more square sails.⁴⁵

Unlike galleys, sailing ships were not first and foremost warships. They were practical vessels built for carrying cargo. The single greatest determining factor in establishing the crew size of a sailing ship was the perceived need for defense, but even in the most dangerous waters, crews were much smaller in sailing ships than in galleys. The difference was even greater when considered in proportion to carrying capacity. The cost of shipping in vessels driven by the wind, therefore, was far lower than transporting goods in oar-driven ships. Sailing vessels were used in warfare, though, and were often involved in combat at sea. Large galley fleets were usually accompanied by several sailing vessels carrying supplies, siege equipment, or both. Sailing vessels also had to defend themselves from galleys attacking them in hopes of plundering their

43 Pryor, *Geography*, 25–32.

44 Lopez, *Nascita*, 151.

45 Pryor, *Geography*, 40–43; Unger, "Warships," 243–8.

cargoes, either during simple acts of piracy or as part of wartime operations aimed at disrupting an enemy's trade and undermining its economy. Since galleys always had the initiative in any encounter between a galley and a sailing ship—given the galley's greater maneuverability and ability to proceed regardless of wind conditions—sailing ships had to be defensible, the main element in the ship's defense being its height. Ships themselves were built to ride high out of the water and sailing vessels were fitted with “castles” fore and aft, superstructures or platforms allowing missile troops to fire into attacking ships.⁴⁶ This made it difficult for galleys to board and capture the largest, tallest sailing ships. A famous episode from 1264 illustrates this point. With a fleet of twenty galleys and two large *navi*, or sailing vessels, Simone Grillo left Genoa with orders to sail to Tyre. Departing from the most direct route, he intercepted a Venetian fleet of thirteen merchantmen. Twelve of the Venetian vessels were small sailing ships of around 150 tons each, while one was a huge roundship, the 750-ton Roccaforte. Grillo's galleys were able to capture all of the smaller ships, but not the Roccaforte, which resisted repeated Genoese attacks.⁴⁷

Changing circumstances in the Mediterranean in general, coupled with changing trading patterns, led over time to shifts in the composition of the Genoese fleet. The collapse of the Mongol Empire around 1360 signaled the end of the great overland routes linking Asia to the West. Tamerlane's raids into Crimea, Asia Minor, and Syria did further damage to Genoese trading interests in the Levant,⁴⁸ while Genoese attacks against Sidon and Beirut in 1403 estranged the Republic from the Egyptian Mamluk lords of those cities.⁴⁹ Especially after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Chios became the center of Genoese trade in the eastern Mediterranean and the goods traded were primarily bulk items: alum, wine and cotton.⁵⁰ These are the types of products that were transported in sailing ships to be sold in Flanders along with wool from Spain and England loaded *en route*.⁵¹ More and more of Genoese trade came to be carried in very large sailing ships that bypassed Genoa entirely on their routes from Chios to the North Sea.⁵² With a reduction in the need to transport expensive, low-bulk items such as spices or silks, galleys came to be seen more and more as strictly military vessels. According to the research of

46 Sicking, “Naval Warfare,” 248.

47 Sicking, “Naval Warfare,” 248; Dotson, “Venice, Genoa, and Control,” 122–3.

48 Heers, *L'Occident*, 168.

49 Ashtor, *Levant Trade*, 219.

50 Heers, *L'Occident*, 169.

51 Musso, “Tirannia,” 56.

52 See the discussion in chap. 14, p. 413.

Jacques Heers, in 1458 the Genoese fleet included twenty-six large sailing ships, carracks, with a total displacement of roughly 16,200 tons, an average of just over 620 tons per ship.⁵³ Similarly, in 1459 the Council of Elders noted that the city had only three galleys.⁵⁴

This brings us to one of the distinguishing characteristics of Genoese naval operations, the substantial role of private citizens in arming Genoese forces. The earliest chronicles do not detail how exactly fleets were financed, but it is clear that they were always composed of a combination of privately owned vessels operating alongside ships owned or leased by the communal government. There was nothing resembling a state war fleet. Michel Balard provides an illustrative example of a fleet organized to attack the Venetians in 1263. Pietrino Grimaldi and Pescetto Mallone loaned the commune 36,000 *lire genovesi* for the war effort. Grimaldi and Mallone were then placed in command of a fleet of twenty-five galleys and six support vessels, while the government imposed a forced loan of 30,000 *lire genovesi*. Taxes were increased on imports of grain, and the increased revenue assigned to the forced creditors to the state. This financial maneuver also marks the first time that the terms *luoghi* and *colonna* were used, terms later associated with the workings of the Casa di San Giorgio, where *luoghi* referred to individual shares of public debt and *colonna* to the comprehensive account or collection of *luoghi* owned by an individual.⁵⁵ Various entities were called upon repeatedly to finance expeditions: the *alberghi*, towns of the *Dominio* and feudatories of the commune. Taxes were either instituted or increased in order to repay the loans, or at least to pay interest on them. Creditors came together to form associations, *compere*, to pressure the government into dedicating resources to the repayment of such loans.⁵⁶ In this way, the lack of permanent funding for what was a nearly permanent state of war led to a dramatic increase in the public debt, but also forged the tools that would later be incorporated into the organization of the Casa di San Giorgio. Naval historian John Dotson also credits Genoese reliance on privately built and operated vessels with favoring, or at least

53 Heers, *Genova nel '400*, 180; Balard, "Genoese Naval Forces," 137–8. See also Olgati, *Classis*, *passim*.

54 Balard, "Genoese Naval Forces," 137–8. It should be pointed out, however, that the galleys mentioned were publicly owned ships; there were almost certainly several more privately owned Genoese galleys at the time.

55 On public debt, the *Mahone*, and the Casa di San Giorgio, see chap. 15.

56 Balard, "Genoese Naval Forces," 139.

allowing, more technical innovation.⁵⁷ He points to early Genoese adoption of the trireme galley in the late thirteenth century as evidence of this. With three oarsmen per bench rather than two, the trireme had half again as many crew members and a greater capacity for soldiers and mechanical artillery.⁵⁸

The Genoese reliance on privately owned vessels also contributed to the characteristically loose structure of its colonial empire. The creation of the *Mahona* of Chios and the privately-run colony illustrate the point.⁵⁹ In 1346 a fleet of twenty-nine galleys was assembled for the conquest of Chios. The ship owners covered the expenses of the expedition, 250,000 *lire genovesi*, and on return from the expedition entered into negotiations with the government for repayment. 203,000 lire were repaid in the form of obligations, *luoghi del Capitolo*, but the ship owners, now bound together in a creditors' association that went by the name of the *Mahona* of Chios, also received property and the administration of the island.⁶⁰

Naval Campaigns: Strategies and Goals

Finally, returning to the theme of naval warfare as inextricably linked with a variety of rivalries both within Genoa and in the broader Mediterranean world, an examination is due of Genoa's tumultuous relationship with its Tuscan partner and rival, Pisa, culminating in the Battle of Meloria and the virtual destruction of Pisan power. The thirteenth- and fourteenth-century campaigns against Venice, too, illustrate the strategies and tactics of engagements on the scale of large fleets, but they also indicate the limits of warfare in pursuing the political and commercial goals of the maritime cities, as well as the conditioning role played by internal rivalries in larger conflicts.

The earliest records of Genoese naval activity in the western Mediterranean tell a tale of cooperation with Pisa and hostility to Muslim powers. By the early eleventh century Mujahid of Dénia had undertaken efforts to conquer Sardinia and launched raids against the Italian mainland. In reaction to this, in 1016 Pope Benedict VIII organized an expedition of Pisan and Genoese ships

57 Dotson, "Venice, Genoa, and Control," 123. This contrasts sharply with Venetian practice. Venice built its warships in the state-owned arsenal. Private individuals could lease ships from the state, but ownership remained in public hands.

58 Dotson, "Venice, Genoa, and Control," 123–4.

59 Discussed in greater detail in chap. 15, pp. 431–3.

60 Balard, "Genoese Naval," 139.

against the forces of Mujahid in Sardinia.⁶¹ The Muslim forces were defeated, but the expedition focused Genoese and Pisan attention on the possibility of exploiting Sardinia for themselves. War broke out between the two Italian cities in the 1060s, but we find them again launching a joint expedition in 1087, this time against Mahdia, the capital of a Muslim state in Ifriqiya (now in Tunisia). The two Italian cities were again united in an expedition in support of Alfonso of Castile's efforts to take Valencia five years later. There is little information about this expedition, all of it from Arab sources, but it apparently failed due to discord between Genoese and Pisans. Similarly, the few vessels lent by private Genoese shippers to the Pisan expedition against the Balearic Islands in 1113–15 were withdrawn.⁶²

Thus, when the Genoese ventured beyond the coasts of Liguria the forces they encountered were those of the Pisans and of the various Muslim powers. While the Genoese were willing to trade with both, and fought wars against both, the relationships were different. The Muslims of Spain and of North Africa were enemies with whom one could also trade. Pisa, on the other hand, was a rival. Pisa and Genoa were both Christian cities harnessing an anti-Muslim sentiment in order to disrupt and appropriate the same segment of Muslim-dominated trade routes. They both sought to exploit the same islands of Sardinia and Corsica. They were destined to clash with the ferocity found only in struggles between likes. For two cities located so close to one another, it was only a matter of time before the areas of influence encountered one another, overlapped, and collided. The first war between the two cities erupted in 1060 and seems to have been fought over trading privileges and reciprocal attempts to exclude one another from access to Corsica and its resources.⁶³ Such wars would erupt periodically until one of the two contenders was destroyed.

Thus Genoa and Pisa fought repeatedly over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the final campaign being sparked in 1282 when Pisa gave refuge to a Corsican rebel. Genoa launched a raid on Elba in February 1283.⁶⁴ Later that year the Genoese fleet trapped part of the Pisan fleet at Porto Vecchio near Piombino.⁶⁵ The Pisans refused to give battle, protecting

61 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.11; *G&G*, 22–3.

62 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.12–13.

63 Vitale, *Breviario*, 1.12.

64 Dotson, "Venice, Genoa, and Control," 123–4. Prior to this raid galley fleets almost never left port in winter. The fact that the Genoese were willing to send a fleet out in February indicates that navigational techniques had changed, bringing about much greater confidence. These changes are probably linked to the introduction of the magnetic compass.

65 Rodgers, *Naval Warfare under Oars*, 129.

their ships behind a line of pilings driven into the seabed. Prior to the widespread use of gunpowder, if fleets could not close in on an enemy, no combat could take place. If a fleet or even a single ship could protect itself behind a physical barrier, it could effectively try to simply wait out its enemy. When the remainder of the Pisan fleet approached from the open sea, the Genoese pursued it, capturing some ships and running others aground on the beach while the previously trapped portion of the fleet escaped, taking refuge behind the chain protecting Porto Pisano from attackers (see fig. 56). The chain, a common feature of medieval ports, served the same function as the pilings at Porto Vecchio. If attacking ships were unable to break the chain, they could not carry an attack inside the harbor.⁶⁶ Running low on water and unable to keep the Pisans pinned down much longer in Porto Vecchio, the Genoese fleet had chosen the less fruitful strategy of chasing enemy vessels in open water, rather than attempting to destroy the larger trapped fleet. This illustrates one of the prime weaknesses of the galley as a ship type. With a large crew and small hold the galley could not carry provisions for an extended cruise. The Genoese fleet had already been at sea for ten days and was reaching the limits imposed by its supply of fresh water.

Early the next year the Genoese attacked Sardinia, laying siege to Sassari on the northwest tip of the island. In July a fleet of thirty galleys under the command of Benedetto Zaccaria was sent to aid the siege of Sassari; the Pisans, under Albertino Morosini, a Venetian patrician acting as Pisan *podestà*, and Ugolino della Gherardesca, decided to attack Genoa while the Genoese fleet was divided.⁶⁷ Genoese commander Oberto Doria learned that the Pisans were planning an attack and recalled Zaccaria. The Pisan fleet of 72 galleys arrived off Genoa on July 31 in time to see Zaccaria's squadron enter the port. Without the element of surprise or a numerical advantage the Pisans withdrew, followed by the now reunited Genoese fleet. On August 6 Doria caught up with the Pisans at Porto Pisano where their fleet was anchored near the towers of the port, protected by the shoals of Meloria.

Doria drew up his fleet in two squadrons, the main one consisting of 63 galleys and eight smaller vessels in a line abreast, their masts in place and the sails loose, blocking the view of Zaccaria's squadron of thirty galleys deployed behind with their masts down. Morosini miscounted the number of enemy vessels and came out of the port to attack.⁶⁸ Here as in most fleet engagements the galleys of each fleet were bound to one another, flank to flank, bows facing

66 On the significance of the broken harbor chains as military trophies, see chap. 10, pp. 299–300.

67 Rodgers, *Naval Warfare under Oars*, 130–31.

68 Rodgers, *Naval Warfare under Oars*, 131–2.

the enemy. It is clear from contemporary descriptions of battle that the cables linking the ships did not keep them so close to one another as to impede rowing, so they did not form a single fighting platform. They did, however, keep the ships in formation, their main function being that of keeping enemy ships from breaking through the line, much the same way port chains kept enemy vessels out. With the line broken, individual ships could be flanked and their defenders forced to fight on two fronts.

The battle began with much launching of missiles as catapults, ballistae and crossbows fired their projectiles. Closing in on the hostile fleet, crews hurled quicklime, soap (to make decks slippery), hot oil and other items at the approaching enemy before the ships closed and soldiers, sailors, and oarsmen entered the fray. Morosini was captured when Zaccaria attacked his ship from the rear; apparently the "hidden" Genoese squadron had managed to flank the Pisan fleet. Ugolino escaped with about thirty ships, and the others were either sunk or captured. Exact figures for casualties are nearly impossible to come by for medieval battles, but Pisa lost at least 8,000 men, perhaps as many as 14,000 between those killed, wounded and captured.⁶⁹

The Genoese did not attack the city itself. Ugolino della Gherardesca managed to gain control of the city, but was forced to cede possessions to Pisa's hostile Guelf neighbors. Ugolino was slow to negotiate the return of Genoa's prisoners, including many prominent Ghibellines. As his popularity waned, the city descended into factional strife and in a period when its traditional Levant trade was contracting and rival inland cities, namely Florence, were growing in power, Pisa was unable to regain its former influence.⁷⁰ After the Battle of Meloria Pisa was no longer a serious rival to Genoa.

With Pisa neutralized, Genoa, at the height of its power, sought to eliminate its Venetian rival as well. An enormous fleet of 165 galleys was assembled in 1295, but sailed no farther than the Strait of Messina.⁷¹ The logistical strain of keeping such a huge fleet supplied must have prevented it from continuing to the Adriatic. The unparalleled expense of mobilizing such a fleet surely contributed to renewed tensions within the Genoese state and conflict between rival Guelf and Ghibelline factions. Financially strapped and racked by internal divisions, Genoa was unable to launch a fleet in 1296, in spite of Venetian attacks on its Black Sea colonies. When the Genoese were able to revive the war effort against Venice in 1298, its fleet of 77 galleys under Lamba

69 Rodgers, *Naval Warfare under Oars*, 131–2.

70 Polonio, "Dalla marginalità," 35.

71 Dotson, "Genoa and Control," 125–6; Lane, *Venice*, 83. On the earlier Genoese-Venetian War of Saint Sabas (which also involved the Pisans), see chap. 17, pp. 489–90.

Doria destroyed a larger Venetian fleet off the island of Curzola in the Adriatic. Due to internal divisions at home, however, the Genoese were unable to take advantage of their victory. A year later, Venice had armed another fleet and was able to attack Genoa itself with the support of Genoese Guelfs in Monaco. With both sides exhausted and open civil war in Genoa, a truce was signed.⁷²

A third war was fought with Venice in the 1350s. Both sides won stunning victories, destroying or capturing entire fleets. Internal divisions again led to an outbreak of civil strife in Genoa and again an inconclusive peace was negotiated. Finally, the fourth war between Genoa and Venice, the War of Chioggia (1378–81), marked the culmination of Genoa's rivalry with Venice and in a sense its end.⁷³ Its spark was the Genoese conquest of Famagusta, ostensibly in retaliation for a slight by King Peter II of Cyprus. The Byzantine emperor Andronicus IV then granted Genoa the island of Tenedos at the mouth of the Dardanelles, making the Venetians fear that the Genoese might now be able to choke off Venetian trading networks. Given the limited autonomy of galley fleets, a network of friendly ports at regular intervals was essential for maintaining long-distance trade. Since the fall of Acre in 1291, Cyprus had been Venice's advanced base for trade with the Levant, but with Famagusta in Genoese hands, Venetian trade would be under constant threat. Occupation of Tenedos, on the other hand, would give the Genoese a base right at the entrance to the Dardanelles, in a position to intercept any shipping entering the Black Sea.

In the meantime the Genoese forged alliances with the king of Hungary and with the city of Padua (on the mainland near Venice), clearly hoping to crush Venice itself as it had Pisa a century earlier. Venice in turn sought an alliance with Milan and encouraged rebellion in Liguria, never a difficult prospect.

The key action of the war began when, following the defeat of a Venetian squadron in the Adriatic, the combined forces of Genoa and Padua captured the town of Chioggia at the southern end of the Venetian lagoon. The Venetians then scuttled ships in the channels connecting Chioggia both to the mainland and to the open sea. Any supplies to the Genoese forces would have had to arrive via the deeper channels of the lagoon, now effectively blocked; the Genoese fleet was trapped, the besiegers besieged. With the Genoese in Chioggia, a second Venetian squadron cruised the Mediterranean raiding Genoese shipping. Genoa sent squadrons into the Adriatic on two occasions, but was unable to reach the forces trapped in Chioggia. In June 1380, running low on food and ammunition, the Genoese in Chioggia surrendered. The

72 Lane, *Venice*, 84.

73 Lane provides a thorough overview of the war: *Venice*, 189–96.

Venetians captured nineteen galleys and four thousand men. The war dragged on for another year before the two cities, both exhausted, agreed to yet another inconclusive peace. Venice's trading networks remained intact, while Genoa entered into a century of internal convulsion and would come repeatedly under the domination of foreign powers who were not interested in conflict with Venice. Over the course of that century the center of gravity of Genoese commerce gradually shifted to the western Mediterranean, away from direct competition with the Venetians. As their rivalry waned, so did the potential for conflict between the two maritime powers.

In conclusion, given the degree of internal division within Genoa and the divisiveness of Genoese society, the city's forces at sea usually showed remarkable unity of intent and action. Political rivalries, however—whether between powerful families or entire factions—were often a conditioning factor in the city's wars. Campaigns were cut short due to disagreements at home and the political rivals of Genoa's rulers at any given time could quickly become allies of the city's enemies. Conflict at sea was not explicitly about gaining territory or enhancing the power of a ruling elite; it was about money. Naval warfare involving Genoese forces was nearly always a function of commercial rivalry. While early aggression was religiously motivated, anti-Muslim *animus* was never the exclusive cause or driving force behind naval actions. Historians of naval warfare often draw comparisons with more modern notions of "control of the sea," when such a notion could have meant little to the actual historical actors. In an age when any ship could be a warship and a merchantman, when trading outposts were established through force of arms, there was no clear line demarcating what was and was not warfare. There were fortunes to be made through trade, though, and that was something to fight over.

The goals of naval conflict, then, were broadly related to commerce. This could take any number of forms: plunder for the sake of plunder; plunder in order to damage commercial rivals, wearing them down in a war of economic attrition;⁷⁴ violence and the threat of violence in order to open markets and establish bases for trading operations. Finally, when conflict escalated to the level of large-scale fleet operations, the aim was to destroy a commercial rival: first Pisa, then Venice. Pisa was eliminated as a rival; Venice was not. For as decisive as the Battle of Meloria was, it was not the naval victory that decided Pisa's fate. One of the most remarkable things about the accounts of seemingly crushing victories and defeats is that the defeated party was nearly always able to launch

74 Lane points out that during the second war between Venice and Genoa, neither side bothered to protect their merchant vessels; both Venice and Genoa used their fleets to raid the opponent's colonies (*Venice*, 83).

a new fleet within a year or two and continue the war. Captured soldiers and sailors were ransomed and new ships were built. Wars were decided by attrition, by the weight of their cost and the strain they placed on the economies and social fabric of the contending city-states. Ugolino della Gherardesca's reluctance to ransom the Pisans captured at Meloria made it impossible for Pisa to continue the war against Genoa while it faced enemies on the mainland that would eventually absorb it. The Genoese disaster at Chioggia, on the other hand, did not destroy Genoa, because Genoa and Venice had been bled to a similar degree. The fighting between the two cities ended not because of any battle, but because their commercial networks came to overlap less and less.

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Genoa and the Crusades

Merav Mack

“Just before the time of the expedition to Caesarea, a *compagna* of three years began.” As the opening sentence of the Genoese annals shows, the history of Genoa in the Middle Ages is entwined with the history of the crusader kingdom of Jerusalem (maps 1–2).¹ The two histories begin with the glory of the First Crusade and share a sense of the importance of times that must be recorded for posterity. The annals of Genoa begin with the swearing of the *compagna*: the agreement that served as the foundation of the commune, a great moment in the city’s development and its first major political experiment.² Likewise, the crusaders’ conquest of Caesarea in 1101 is a historical landmark that the author presumed all citizens of Genoa would know and remember. Therefore, although Genoa had a long history before the crusades, its written history begins only with the First Crusade. In the following pages of the annals, the annalist Caffaro elaborates on the heroic battles of the Genoese across the sea at the sieges of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Caesarea, until it becomes evident to the reader that Genoese history is a narrative not of one city but of distant but closely-linked parts of the Mediterranean. Above all, this principle is manifested in two new identities acquired by the Genoese at the time of the First Crusade: citizens of the commune and crusaders. When Guglielmo Embriaco, the city’s most famous naval commander and leader of the Genoese crusaders, rallied his people before the conquest of Caesarea he addressed them as “citizens and warriors of God.”³ With these words he articulated Genoa’s unique mixture of civic pride combined with the military and religious ethos of the crusades.

Like their fellow merchants from Pisa, Venice, or Catalonia the Genoese were travellers who acted simultaneously as businessmen, merchants, crusaders, and diplomats, occupying an exceptional position in the political and economic spheres of the Mediterranean. They navigated the boundaries between different cultures and religious groups, living in many parts of the Mediterranean among western and eastern Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

1 On the civic annals and their first chronicler Caffaro: chaps. 1, pp. 37–9, and 11, pp. 323–5.

2 On the swearing of the *compagna* in 1099: chap. 4, pp. 99–103.

3 *O cives et bellatores Dei!*: AGC for 1101, 1.11.

They did business with people from all social strata, and were often able to access regions that were closed to others. The crusades expanded the horizons of Italian entrepreneurs like the Genoese, creating new opportunities and encouraging the development of new weapons, ships and navigational tools. But members of the Italian communes had an unusual talent for exercising multiple functions—simultaneously acting as hardheaded merchants and zealous crusaders, or as arms dealers equipping opposing sides. These professionals often made their seafaring expertise available to the highest bidder, and the ethical questions that emerged from their actions won them harsh (and not always justified) criticism at the time and even today. Trying to understand their motivations at the time of the crusades remains an intriguing scholarly task.

The study of Genoese involvement in the crusades and the Latin East enriches Genoa's own history with its large body of evidence, including chronicles, annals, and diaries written by people of other origins, including both Christians and Muslims. Genoa itself provides its own unique contribution: its state archives contain an exceptional collection of tens of thousands of deeds—mostly but not exclusively commercial contracts—registered in large volumes of notarial cartularies.⁴ This is a unique and important collection, the earliest of its kind in Europe: its records of merchants' activities over lengthy periods, including the crusades, are a treasure-trove allowing us to trace individuals over time and explore the world as they knew it. Through these Genoese stories we can hear echoes of many other merchants of the same period whose records have not survived (whether Christian, Muslim, or Jewish)—travellers who negotiated and exchanged not only commodities but also ideas and knowledge.

Our understanding of these complex dynamics has been hampered, however, by the siloed nature of academic specialization: the history of the crusades and the history of Genoa, for example, have traditionally been treated as two separate fields within medieval studies. Some exceptions can be found in the work of historians such as Marie-Louise Favreau-Lilie and David Jacoby, which has focused on the Italian contributions to the history of the crusader states, while Genoese scholars such as Gabriella Airdi, Laura Balletto, and Sandra Origone have studied the history of the Genoese in the Latin East. Beyond these, the field of economic history has contributed major insights, from the work of Heyd (1885) to R.S. Lopez's so-called "Commercial Revolution" (1971). In an oft-quoted phrase, Lopez defined the Italian communes as "essentially governments of the merchants, by the merchants, for the merchants, an ideal platform for the commercial revolution."⁵

4 See discussion in chap. 1, pp. 42–7; also Balletto, "Fonti notarili."

5 Lopez, *Commercial Revolution*, 71.

A richer picture has since been offered (by Jones, Abulafia, Greif, and others) of an extended revolution unparalleled in extent and proportions to any previous historical reforms. This revolution involved new concepts of liberty of trade and of urban civility, which challenged common social structures and norms.

Finally, over the past half century, scholars have contextualized the history of the Italian maritime cities within the history of the Mediterranean, an analytical concept studied as a field of social transformations, economic interactions, technological innovation, and—most importantly—an arena of multicultural exchange. Building on Braudel's monumental *The Mediterranean in the Age of Philip II* (1949), the second half of the twentieth century saw growing fascination with commercial communities and Mediterranean societies.⁶ Most recently, Abulafia's award-winning *The Great Sea* (2011) shows how the sea has united various peoples into one cultural and political zone. Rather than being the division imagined many years ago by Henri Pirenne, during the times of the crusades the Mediterranean became a highway for merchants, and technological advances enabled them to cross it faster, with heavier loads of merchandise, and more often than ever before.⁷ While much work has been done to develop methodologies for studying Genoa's influential role in the history of the Mediterranean, we have only begun to plumb the depths of the city's rich notarial archives.⁸

Merchant Crusaders (1097–1110)

Coinciding with the establishment of the first commune in Genoa, the First Crusade catalyzed Genoa's urban history. The consuls of the commune served as naval commanders and ambassadors as well as judges and governors. The city's first chronicler, Caffaro di Rustico (*ca.* 1080–1166) began writing his annals upon returning from the crusade in 1101, and later expanded on this subject in a book specially dedicated to that period,

6 For example: Goitein's multi-volume study of the Cairo Geniza, *A Mediterranean Society* (1967–93); the *Mediterranean Historical Review* (established 1986); Horden and Purcell, *Corrupting Sea* (2000); and Malkin's theoretical contribution, *Mediterranean Paradigms* (2005).

7 While Italian merchants had been sailing across the Mediterranean long before the crusades, technological improvements in both ship-building and navigation were pivotal in crusading warfare: Pryor, *Geography*, as well as chap. 16, pp. 457–61.

8 See especially Balletto's *Genova, Mediterraneo, Mar Nero* (1976) and Balard's *Romanie génoise* (1978), but also the work of Erik Bach, David Abulafia, Geo Pistarino, and Marco Tangheroni.

*On the Liberation of the Cities of the East.*⁹ The Genoese set an important precedent by linking their fate as a commune to that of the nascent crusader state. While each European knight that participated was bound solely to his lord, the Genoese participated as a community: during the crusade and the first years after the conquest, they repeatedly put their collective resources at the service of the Latin East. In exchange for its military (especially naval) assistance, the commune required official acknowledgement, along with legal and commercial privileges that applied to all its citizens.

That the Genoese were undeniably affected by their crusading experience is visible in their impulse to document the events. Caffaro documented the historical moment not from the viewpoint of a cleric—like many other writers of the time—but from the secular perspective of a citizen, diplomat, merchant, and soldier. Rather than a world history or a history of salvation, his annals are very much an urban history. His participation in the Crusade, in fact, encourages historians to believe that he may have acquired the idea of writing the annals from examples he encountered in the East.¹⁰ Thus, while the Genoese were familiar with the archival impulse to record legal charters and privileges, it was Caffaro who provided their first narrative history.

The early years of the crusader expeditions provided Genoa with legendary heroes as well as its most meaningful profits. It was the first of the Italian maritime cities to offer support to the First Crusade, and its first engagement was in summer 1097 when its fleet arrived at the port of Saint Symeon near Antioch. When Antioch was conquered a year later Genoa received its first concession—a model for many future grants.¹¹ Right from the outset, therefore, Genoese participation involved an ongoing presence in the crusader states. In Antioch the concession included a church and thirty nearby houses, a well, and a warehouse—in other words, a solid basis for a small community.¹² In exchange, the Genoese promised Bohemond of Taranto (now prince of Antioch) to “help him to hold and defend the city against any who might attack it.”¹³ Likewise, in 1099 consul Guglielmo Embriaco the Elder (called “Hammerhead”:

9 Caffaro, *De liberatione civitatum orientis*, in *AGC* 1.95–124. On Caffaro, see n. 1 above; also Phillips, “Caffaro,” and Face, “Secular History.” On the *Liberation*, see also the discussion in chap. 5, pp. 122–3.

10 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 4.

11 *G&G*, 29–32; Balard, “Communes italiennes,” 57; Byrne, “Genoese Colonies,” 146–8. On the integration of Genoese trade and crusading, see chaps. 14, 16, and 18.

12 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 169–70; *CDG*, doc. 7, 1.11–12.

13 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 170.

Caputmallei or *Testadimaglio*) was the admiral of the Genoese fleet. Having landed at Jaffa during the siege of Jerusalem, he commanded his people to dismantle their ships and carry the wood to Jerusalem to build siege machines—a step without which the siege might not have succeeded.

Crusader vows were in principle fulfilled after the conquest of Jerusalem and the liberation of the Holy Sepulcher (15 July 1099), but Genoese enthusiasm only increased upon the fleet's return with both happy news and urgent requests for further support for the young kingdom.¹⁴ Caffaro, who joined the crusade himself at that point, reports that a major wave of Genoese crusaders left for the East where they led some of its most successful battles. In one of his greatest scenes, Caffaro describes Guglielmo Embriaco scaling the walls of Caesarea in 1101, calling his people to follow him: "Climb up, climb up and capture the city quickly!"¹⁵ This image turned him into the city's most legendary hero to date.¹⁶ From Caesarea the Genoese brought back the *Sacro Catino* (fig. 46), an ancient green bowl they believed was the Holy Grail, and which is still kept in the cathedral of San Lorenzo in Genoa.

The Genoese contribution was particularly important, therefore, in the first decade of the crusader states' struggle for existence: its fleet assisted in the conquests of Arsuf and Caesarea (1101), Tartus (1102), Acre and Gibelet (1104), Tripoli and Jableh (1109)¹⁷ and Beirut (1110). Lacking a navy, the young Frankish states were unable to conquer the cities along the coast by themselves, and Genoa was a reliable partner in their efforts.¹⁸ In return for its help Genoa received charters securing commercial privileges and possessions in the kingdom of Jerusalem, the principality of Antioch, and the county of Tripoli. King Baldwin I even made an outstanding gesture to the Genoese in Jerusalem, ordering an inscription in golden letters inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher that acknowledged their help, listed their privileges, and secured their special status, an act which King Amalric (1163–74) later attempted to retract by

14 Jerusalem's conqueror Godfrey of Bouillon, who preferred the title *Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri* ("Defender of the Holy Sepulcher") to that of king, died on 18 July 1100.

15 *Ascendite, ascendite, et ciuitatem uelociter capescite!*: AGC for 1101, 1.12.

16 On the Embriaco: Cardini, "Profilo"; Face, "Secular History"; Airal di, *Blu*; Pessa, *Genova* (especially chapters by Airal di and Ameri).

17 There is some confusion between two locations with similar names conquered in 1104 and 1109, which Caffaro refers to as *Gibellum maiorem*, now Jableh in Syria, and *Gibellum minorem*, here Gibelet/Byblos, now Jubayl in Lebanon (AGC for 1101, 1.13–14). See Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 11, 35–6, 57, 152, 174; for a different conclusion based on Albert of Aachen see Albert, *History*, 101n32.

18 Abulafia, *Great Sea*, 292; Pryor, *Geography*, 114–24.

erasing the inscription. No other community was acknowledged in this way, which has made some historians suspect that the story was made up in Genoa.¹⁹

Why was the Genoese contribution to Jerusalem so outstanding, and why did they value their possessions beyond the sea? The economist Avner Greif has argued that “the commercial importance of various Italian cities rose and fell depending on their possessions, since possessions substantially reduced the risk and cost of commerce, enabling their holders to crowd out unprivileged traders.”²⁰ However, although Genoa stepped in first it was not necessarily given the best facilities. Acre was the only major port in the kingdom until the conquest of Tyre (1124), but unlike those of its rivals, Genoa's quarter was located inland and access to the port was via territory under their rivals' jurisdiction. Accordingly, one important achievement in this period was a concession from the count of Tripoli to the cathedral of San Lorenzo: Gibelet, north of Beirut, known today as Jubayl or Byblos (its Greek name), an entire city with an independent port, the administration of which the Genoese entrusted to the Embriaci family.

Following Genoa's example, its Italian rivals arrived: a fleet from Pisa took part in the siege of Jaffa in 1099, while the Venetians assisted in the bloody conquest of Haifa (but were disappointed by their material compensation).²¹ The Pisans were rewarded with possessions and its fleet commander, Archbishop Daimbert, became the first Latin patriarch of Jerusalem.²² Among the three Italian maritime powers Venice was a latecomer to the competition. Yet in 1123, the Venetian fleet was in Crete when news arrived that King Baldwin II of Jerusalem had been taken captive; Doge Domenico Michiel accordingly diverted his fleet to Acre to provide help. Instead of waiting for a reward, however, he demanded a contract in advance, so in the absence of the king the precedent-setting *Pactum Warmundi* was signed with Gormond of Picquigny, patriarch of Jerusalem.²³ The following year, the Venetians helped the Franks conquer Tyre,

19 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, doc. 2a (173–5). Scholars debated the historical plausibility of the Genoese golden-letter inscription in the Holy Sepulchre for some twenty-five years: Mayer/Favreau, “Diplom”; Favreau-Lilie, *Italiener*, 96–111; Kedar, “Golden Inscription.” The debate was summarized by Rovere in *LI* 1.1.100, doc. 61 (1104), and followed by Mayer, “Genuesische Fälschungen.”

20 Greif, “Self-Enforcing Systems,” 27.

21 Madden, *Enrico Dandolo*, 12; Abulafia, *Great Sea*, 292. For a comparison of the charters granted to the Italian maritime cities in this period: Favreau-Lilie, *Italiener*, 39–149.

22 Favreau-Lilie, *Italiener*, 55–110.

23 William of Tyre, *Chronicon* 12.24. On Patriarch Gormond, see Mayer, “Concordat”; *Urkunden Venedig* 1.79–81, no. 40; Favreau-Lilie, *Italiener*, 147–9; Jacoby, “Venetian Privileges.”

the most important remaining Fatimid coastal stronghold apart from Ascalon. Tyre's fortified peninsula was strategically located in the midst of what was becoming Christian territory, so its conquest was particularly important to the king of Jerusalem, who was compelled to confirm the Venetian terms upon his release in 1125. Because they had access to the greatest navies in the world the Frankish states never built a proper navy. They trusted the Italian cities and were prepared to pay the Italians' prices whenever they faced danger. From the Italian perspective, as one scholar has phrased it: "the greater the need for their fleets, the better the privileges they could hope to squeeze out of the royal court in Jerusalem."²⁴

Complexities of a Crusading World (1110–87)

One hotly-debated question for historians of the crusades is how to define them: while the word "crusade" was not used at the time, the concept of holy war involved many synonymous terms. One common phrase employed by the Genoese was the "service of God," which at the times of the crusades was supplemented with the words "and the Holy Sepulcher" or "in the service of God and *Ultramar*." The word *Ultramar*—which like the French *Outremer* literally means "beyond the sea"—was the common name by which the Genoese referred to the crusader states.

After a first decade of intense conquests and expansion, the need for Genoa's military assistance in the Latin East declined, or so it seems in official records. No private commercial records survive from this period until the 1150s to confirm how commercial investments developed, although the Genoese presence in the East continued. Further, during the second quarter of the twelfth century, Genoa was engaged in matters closer to home—mostly in an intermittent series of wars with Pisa from 1119 into the 1140s.²⁵

The Second Crusade (1145–9) involved simultaneous campaigns in the Iberian peninsula, the Baltic, and the Holy Land (with the primary goal of regaining Edessa): "an attack of unprecedented magnitude on the enemies of Christendom."²⁶ Between 1147 and 1148 the Genoese launched attacks on two powerful Muslim cities in Spain, Almería in the south and Tortosa in the north. This was not Genoa's first attempt on the Iberian peninsula, but as Caffaro explains in his *History of the Capture of Almería and Tortosa*, it was Genoa's

²⁴ Abulafia, *Great Sea*, 293.

²⁵ G&G, 40–49.

²⁶ Phillips, *Second Crusade*, xviii.

response to “a divine call through the Apostolic See” to eliminate attacks by Muslim pirates who ruled the seas, torturing and enslaving Christians, and forcing them to convert to Islam.²⁷ It is not known definitively that the pope granted this war a status of a crusade—namely, that he granted indulgences to its warriors—but it certainly seems to have held that status in the minds of many Genoese participants. Pope Eugenius III’s *Divina dispensatione II* of April 1147 alludes to this fact,²⁸ and Caffaro’s own history of these engagements is also suggestive, since it uses the same language as his *Liberation of the Cities of the East*.

The people of Genoa took pride in their crusading achievements even beyond their material gains.²⁹ For example, despite the positive conclusion of *The History of the Capture of Almería and Tortosa*—“victorious over the two cities ... they returned to Genoa with the whole expeditionary force, giving thanks to God”—Caffaro knew well that the campaigns on Almería and Tortosa incurred for Genoa the sizable debt of six thousand *lire genovesi*, which it only paid off in 1155.³⁰ Nonetheless, Caffaro considered the expedition to have achieved its military and religious aims, and framed the war as a Genoese victory—perhaps because as a consul he was accountable for it.³¹

Yet beyond glory, profit, and occasional debt, crusading brought new conceptual and legal challenges to Genoese society. Philip Jones’ observation that “medieval expansion was more mercantile than military” was certainly true for Genoa, and this expansion also affected life back at home.³² In the twelfth century the Genoese had already gone through a process of restructuring their social boundaries and redefining citizenship.³³ Now through their various settlements in the Mediterranean they explored their urban identity as well. Like the Pisans and Venetians, the Genoese were not merely using their trading posts for financial gain. Rather, they established churches and communal facilities to serve their citizens wherever they received concessions—in Frankish cities such as Tyre, Acre, Tripoli, and Antioch, but also on smaller scales in

27 Caffaro, *Ystoria captionis*, in *AGC* 1.79–89; Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 127. Pope Eugenius III (1145–53) issued *Divina dispensatione II* in April 1147 (Phillips, *Second Crusade*, 255–6). See also the Genoese speech at the court of Alfonso VII in Córdoba in 1146: Williams, “Making of a Crusade,” 38; Gari, “Why Almería?”

28 Phillips, *Second Crusade*, 252–6.

29 Williams, “Making of a Crusade,” 38–9.

30 Caffaro, *Ystoria captionis*, in *AGC* 1.88; Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 135.

31 Against Williams’ theory, see Krueger, “Post-War Collapse.”

32 Jones, *City-State*, 11; see also discussion in chap. 18.

33 Greif (*Institutions*, 172–5) considers internal clan politics and struggles for power the prime movers of Genoese identity politics; see also *CASD*.

Alexandria and Constantinople. Yet after several generations abroad some redefinition of citizenship was required. Were the descendants of Genoese, Venetians, or Pisans who had settled in the Latin East still considered citizens of their home cities?³⁴ Did they continue to have rights and duties in their home cities, and what happened when their loyalties conflicted? Similar questions troubled the rulers of the crusader states: could they trust citizens with more than one loyalty? Were they bound to give "Italian" commercial and legal privileges to descendants of Italian citizens who had been born and raised in the crusader states? In the course of the twelfth century the numbers of second-, third-, and fourth-generation "Italians" had increased: were they all entitled to special privileges?

Questions of identity and territory aside, there were important economic considerations. A case in point is the city of Gibelet, the only city in the crusader states enfeoffed in its entirety to a sovereign body outside the Latin East. This had been granted to the Genoese cathedral of San Lorenzo in 1109 and leased to Ugo Embriaco for an annual fee.³⁵ The family failed to pay the agreed-upon fee, but several decades passed before any record of complaint about it: in the 1140s, tension grew between the Embriaci, lords of Gibelet, and the republic of Genoa.³⁶ The consuls demanded the equivalent of twenty years' tax payments and threatened to confiscate the family's property in Genoa. A member of the Embriaci clan in Genoa tried to arbitrate, but no settlement was reached until 1147, when Nicola Embriaco of Genoa paid the commune three hundred *lire genovesi* (equivalent to three years of fees); it is unknown if the Embriaci in Gibelet paid any of that.³⁷

Thus a rift also began to grow between the branch of the family in Genoa and their relatives, the lords of Gibelet. This was settled only in 1154 when Genoa signed three independent contracts for leases on its property in the crusader states: Gibelet and Latakia were granted to Guglielmo II Embriaco of Gibelet while the Embriaci in Genoa received management of Genoese properties in Acre and Antioch.³⁸ As part of his investiture, Guglielmo Embriaco

34 Also discussed in chap. 8, pp. 211–12, and chap. 18, pp. 498, 510, and 514 (among others).

35 William of Tyre, *Chronicon* 11.9; Caffaro, *De liberatione*, in AGC 1.124; LI 1.1.182–3, doc. 119 (26 June 1109); Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 176–7. On these early concessions: Byrne, "Genoese Colonies," 146–8; on Genoa's motivations: Favreau-Lilie, *Italiener*, 171; also Origone, "Embriaci."

36 Greif (*Institutions*, 230–32) links this tension to clan politics inside Genoa.

37 CDG, doc. 170, 1.218; Airaldi, *Blu*, 121–3; Origone, "Embriaci"; Byrne, "Genoese Colonies," 150–1.

38 LI 1.1.206–8, doc. 140 (May 1144).

deposited four *vexilla* (battle standards) and a *pallium* (a symbolic cloth) at the church of San Lorenzo.³⁹ These items, which were usually symbols of feudal obedience, signified in this case the exact opposite of a feudal bond—they signaled the final disengagement of the Levantine branch of the family from Genoa.

The next Genoese charter regarding Gibelet dates from 1168, when the people of Genoa received privileges from Ugo II, who styled himself “by the grace of God, lord of Gibelet.”⁴⁰ He clearly did not see himself as a vassal or an administrator working on behalf of the commune. At approximately the same time he began to refer to Gibelet by its ancient Hellenistic name Byblos and to himself as *Hugo de Biblio*.⁴¹ In 1179 the Genoese asked the pope to intervene, claiming that Gibelet had originally been granted to their cathedral church and was therefore ecclesiastical property. Pope Alexander III wrote to Ugo II, but in 1186 Genoa was still trying to recoup its unpaid revenues. Pope Urban III (1185–7), who had strong Genoese ties, sent fourteen letters to the ecclesiastical and lay personnel of the crusader states concerning Genoese property and rights, six of which specifically concerned Gibelet. He demanded that Ugo III pay the debt that had accumulated over seventeen years and end the shame of his father’s “continuous act of rebellion.”⁴² While Gibelet’s surrender to Saladin in 1187 abruptly ended the debate, the theoretical questions surrounding the definition of citizenship status of Genoese living overseas remained.

Who was entitled to the privileges that the Genoese commune secured for its merchants?⁴³ When Ugo II granted his charter to Genoa in 1168 he specified that it applied to all the people who resided in Genoa and its archbishopric—meaning that it did not include those residing in other places, and especially not Genoese residents of Gibelet and other parts of the Latin East. Other charters from the same period make similar distinctions between those who qualified for privileges and those who did not. King Amalric of Jerusalem, for example, restricted a concession to Pisan citizens by excluding “my own men” (*homines mei*), meaning Pisan merchants and their descendants who resided

39 LI 1.1.239–40, doc. 164 (January 1154).

40 LI 1.2.156, doc. 339 (March 1168).

41 See, e.g., *Cartulaire général* 1, docs. 458, 495, 520, 589, 596, 676. Airaldi (*Blu*, 128–30) centers her analysis on the political transformations in Genoa in this period that resulted in waves of emigration of various power groups.

42 LI 1.2.119–34, docs. 316–29 (11–13 March 1186).

43 Jacoby, “Mercanti genovesi”; Abulafia, “Italiani”; Pistarino, “Genova e vicino oriente”; Balard, “Communes italiennes.”

permanently in his kingdom.⁴⁴ On one occasion in 1205 the Genoese corsair Count Enrico [Henry] of Malta and a group of angry “Maltese youths” (*iuvnes Maltenses*) besieged Tripoli until they received a charter granting rights not just to the Genoese, but to all Genoese descendants except the Genoese citizens of Cyprus, Antioch, the kingdom of Jerusalem, and the county of Tripoli.⁴⁵ Presumably this clause gave descendants of the Genoese inhabitants of Malta the same rights as the merchants of Genoa.⁴⁶ Almost every charter granted to members of the overseas maritime communities faced such legal ambiguities and the challenges of new definitions of space, territory, and citizenship.

When the Genoese began to establish trade routes across the Mediterranean, they were looking for outposts from which they could handle commercial exchanges better and more cheaply. They were not seeking to challenge their own notions of urban boundaries and citizenship—but inevitably, after half a century of almost-independent life in the crusader states, the affinities and kinships of the families resident there changed and collided with the priorities of their home cities. Yet dormant loyalties often resurfaced in times of major crisis: in 1187, as we shall see, Genoa renewed its full commitment to the crusader states, and the lords of Gibelet joined the Genoese and their allies in the war against Venice in 1256–8.

Collapse and Recovery (1187–1202)

Saladin’s victory at the Battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187 was an overwhelming defeat for the kingdom of Jerusalem and the rest of the crusader states. Within a few months, all its major cities had surrendered: Acre was followed by Jaffa, Nablus, Sidon, and Beirut, and by October even Jerusalem had given in. Ugo III, lord of Gibelet, who had been captured alongside the king at Hattin, was released in exchange for his city’s surrender.⁴⁷ With the Muslims’ sweeping success Genoa lost most of its possessions in the Latin East. The only city left in Frankish hands within the kingdom of Jerusalem was Tyre, but Genoa had no communal possessions or commercial privileges there. Tyre was saved, however, by marquess Conrad of Monferrato, who was assisted in the city’s defense by his Genoese crew: in return, the grateful barons of the kingdom endowed

44 *Urkunden Jerusalem* D.327 (564–8); Favreau-Lilie, *Italiener*, 441–3.

45 *LI* 1.2.166–8, doc. 345 (July 1205).

46 In a charter of 1189 the prince of Antioch and count of Tripoli refers to the latter as *meis burgensibus lanuensibus de Antiochia et Laoditia et Gabulo*: *LI* 1.2.161, doc. 345 (April 1189).

47 *Continuation* 45 (p. 58); *Conquest* 45 (p. 50).

them with Genoa's first privileges in the city, including tax exemptions, legal rights, a few houses, and a street.⁴⁸ Conrad later compared the bravery of the Genoese to that of the Maccabees.⁴⁹

Genoese ships delivered the news of the Eastern collapse to western Europe. One letter to the pope related events from the beginning of July 1187 until the surrender of Tiberias and Acre at the end of the month.⁵⁰ These ships hastened to return to Europe that summer to deliver the grave news, even before the surrender of Ascalon and Jerusalem in September and October.⁵¹ Genoese ships in the eastern Mediterranean were also involved in ferrying refugees to cities like Tripoli and Alexandria, and eventually back to Europe.⁵²

The Genoese reaction to the fall of the crusader states between 1187 and 1192 challenges the common belief that Genoa's interest in the kingdom of Jerusalem was purely economic. Devastated by the disaster, the Genoese acted on two levels, liaising with various European courts while at the same time launching a campaign to support Conrad of Monferrato in Tyre. The Genoese fleet that sailed to Tyre in autumn 1189 included many former consuls, naval commanders, and diplomats.⁵³ Meanwhile, Rosso della Volta, one of Genoa's most experienced diplomats in eastern Mediterranean matters, was sent to negotiate plans for the Third Crusade with Kings Henry II of England and Philip II of France, and Genoese ambassadors were present at the kings' summit in late 1189 and early 1190.⁵⁴ In February 1190 the Genoese signed a contract to transport to the East the king of France and his impressive army of 650 knights, each with two squires, two horses, and supplies.⁵⁵

The contract does not mention exclusivity, but notarial evidence reveals that beginning in February 1190 no private enterprises were carried out from Genoa, and the annual sailing of the commercial fleet to all long-distance destinations

48 *LI* 1.2.135–7, doc. 330 (1187); Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, doc. 19a (215–16).

49 *LI* 1.2.137–40, doc. 331 (11 April 1190); Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, doc. 19b (216–18). *AGC* for 1187, 2.23–4; Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro* doc. 23 (223); Jacoby, "Conrad."

50 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, doc. 18 (213–15); *Epistola Januensium ad Urbanum papam* in *Chronicle of the Reigns*, 2.11.

51 For the date of the fall of Ascalon: Kedar, "Battle of Hattin," 192n4; on the sailing season in September: Pryor, *Geography*, 4.

52 According to the *Continuation* of William of Tyre 60–61 (pp. 74–5), Saladin's brother forced them to take the refugees, otherwise he would sell them into slavery (trans. in *Conquest*, 65–6).

53 Details in Mack, "Genoese Perspective," 48–9.

54 *AGC* for 1189, 2.30–31; Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, 148–9; Rigord, *Gesta (Oeuvres)*, 30–31, 105) and Guillaume le Breton (*Oeuvres*, 41); also Rigord, *Histoire* 62 (pp. 244–5).

55 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro* doc. 20 (218–20); *LI* 1.6.11–14, doc. 935 (16 February 1190).

(not just the East) was cancelled. Such a reservation of the navy for the crusade was unprecedented, and the Genoese may have regretted it later. The designated date of departure was late June, probably on the customary embarkation day of Saint John the Baptist (24 June). But the carefully-designed plan crumbled when the kings of England and France decided to postpone their departure. The only evidence for the implications of this dramatic decision comes from Genoese notarial documents: as soon as the contract was broken, merchants, shipowners, and sailors made their own private plans to make the best of already-equipped ships. They found customers among crusaders who were also reluctant to wait.

While no notarial cartularies survive from the years 1187–9, when the news of Jerusalem's fall reached Genoa and the first Genoese fleets set out to assist the Latin East, over two thousand documents are available for the years 1190–92 in the cartularies of Oberto *scriba* and Guglielmo Cassinese, along with a few dozen documents by Guglielmo da Sori.⁵⁶ Numerous commercial contracts deal with investments, imports, and exports of a variety of goods to the Latin East; others record contracts between ship-owners, merchants, sailors, and crusaders. Although the crusade is not explicitly mentioned in most of them, it is clear that every contract involving travel to Ultramar in this period was in fact connected with the crusade.

The contracts of 1190–92 provide insight into the practicalities of the Third Crusade. We find shipowners and sailors who took the cross but also expected to profit from the expedition. Other local merchants—for example, the wine merchant Mabilia Leccavella—shared those expectations.⁵⁷ But the prospects of a lucrative expedition collapsed in summer 1190: prices fell as soon as the crusade was delayed. On 6 August 1190 a contract was concluded between two Genoese shipowners, Ansaldo Mallone and Lanfranco Malfigliastro, and the messengers of the lord of Salins, who was probably already in Genoa with his retinue of thirteen knights with their squires and horses.⁵⁸ The terms were based on the contract with the king of France but the price was reduced from nine silver marks of Troyes per knight to 8.5. Other contracts signed by the same shipowners demonstrate the complications of the venture: shipowners

⁵⁶ Cf. chap. 1, pp. 45–7.

⁵⁷ Oberto *scriba*, doc. 271 (20 March 1190), 107; Mack, "Genoese Perspective," 51n33.

⁵⁸ The knights are referred to as *milites domini Guaçerii de Salin*, but in the list of witnesses as *milites ducis*. Richard, however, refers to him as the lord of Salins and lists him in "the contingent from Franche-Comté, with the archbishop of Besançon" and the lord of Champplitte. Richard, *Crusades*, 222; Queller and Madden used an old reference to this document, and thus have wrongly dated this contract to 1184 (*Fourth Crusade*, 12).

had to reconcile the needs of crusaders with those of their merchants and crew. They negotiated the risks that they were willing to take: how close they would get to the war zone, and whether they would risk crossing enemy lines. Some crewmembers' contracts specified that they were allowed to ship grain, which could be sold at a profit in the East, but grain was also shipped over as a form of charity after news of a serious famine in Tyre reached Genoa.⁵⁹

The Third Crusade was the first time a maritime city dedicated its fleet exclusively to the crusade, even constructing new ships for the campaign. Venice was similarly commissioned for the Fourth Crusade in 1201. Both occasions involved written contracts and both cities used advance payments to build ships, purchase supplies, and equip their galleys with men and provisions. But in both cases the crusaders missed the departure deadline, causing many months' delay and grave financial consequences. Further, in Venice in 1201 the nature and scale of the problem was much bigger than in Genoa in 1190. When the king of France negotiated with the Genoese his budget included an army of 650 knights with their retinue. The French knights of 1201, however, acted "outside their area of expertise" with no royal financing, according to the chronicler of the crusade, and negotiated with the Venetians a fleet big enough to transport 4,500 knights.⁶⁰ Far from being a reliable source of income as some economic historians presume, therefore, the crusaders' transport contract was a risky deal for the maritime cities.⁶¹ The loss the Genoese sustained in 1190, in fact, may have contributed to their lack of interest in the contract for the Fourth Crusade.⁶²

Perhaps the most significant political impact of the Third Crusade was the change in Genoa's governing system. The first *compagna* was established at the time of the First Crusade, but when Genoa reorganized its resources to meet the challenges of the Third Crusade it decided to abolish the consular system. Instead, they appointed a *podestà* to govern the city: a non-Genoese governor who, in Steven Epstein's words, was "at once a city manager, military

59 *Guglielmo Cassinese*, doc. 1526 (27 January 1192), 2.163; Mack, "Genoese Perspective," 54–6.

60 Villehardouin, *Conquest* 14–23, in *Chronicles*, 8–9; Madden, *Venice*, 120.

61 *CASD*, 32.

62 This is suggested by chronicler of the Fourth Crusade Robert de Clari: *Conquête* 6 (p. 7). Unlike Geoffrey of Villehardouin, who was one of the leaders of the crusade and a member of the mission to Venice, Robert was a simple warrior and vassal of Peter of Amiens. He had no access to secret councils or classified information, but he also had less reason to conceal the harsh truth of the crusaders' numerous mistakes and failures. Queller and Madden accept Villehardouin's argument that the messengers went directly to Venice: according to them, "the Picard knight (Robert de Clari) is notoriously misinformed about the preliminaries of the crusade ..." (*Fourth Crusade*, 7).

commander, and chief judge, a professional and presumably impartial administrator aloof from Genoa's factionalism."⁶³ The official annalist, recognizing the importance of the moment, boasted that "a new, modern thing happened in Genoa."⁶⁴

Meanwhile, in the Latin East, the Genoese community recovered surprisingly quickly after 1187. By 1195 Genoese representatives in the East had received ten different charters securing rights old and new as well as the concession of properties with new sources of income such as bath-houses, gardens, mills, and ovens, as well as territory designated for a Genoese quarter in Tyre on an advantageous site near the harbor.⁶⁵

Already in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Italian merchants were importing products from centers such as Alexandria and Constantinople. Minerals such as alum, dye materials, aromatics, and spices were imported from Eastern markets.⁶⁶ In the course of the twelfth century the market grew more competitive. If there were only a few trading posts of Amalfitan, Genoese, and Venetian merchants in the Eastern Mediterranean before 1099, the following centuries were a race for power, possessions, and economic benefits led by the great maritime powers but involving many more communities.⁶⁷

Historian Hans Mayer once remarked of the Italian communes in the crusader states that "the privileges they secured, often by pure blackmail, seriously impaired the legal integrity of the state and became a permanent burden on its financial resources."⁶⁸ The subject of merchants' culture and mentalities is sensitive and often debated.⁶⁹ Certainly, the success of the First Crusade was followed by the establishment of trading posts. Soon after its conquest in 1104, Acre became the main port used by western merchants. Tyre began to compete with Acre only twenty years later when it finally joined the kingdom of Jerusalem, but its full stature as a Western stronghold came only after 1187, when the rest of the kingdom crumbled in the face of Saladin's army. When the Venetians received special privileges in Tyre in 1124, they somehow ensured (although the contract is not explicit) that the rival Genoese would be excluded; accordingly, Venice's clear advantage in Tyre was not challenged until 1187, when the Genoese acquired a base in Tyre superior in location to the one

63 G&G, 88; also Greif, *Institutions*, 217–68.

64 AGC for 1190, 2.36.

65 Hall/Phillips, *Caffaro*, docs. 19–24 (215–25); Antaki-Masson, "Tyr."

66 Jacoby, "Acre–Alexandria," 151.

67 Lopez, *Commercial Revolution*, 63–7; Balard, "Notes."

68 Mayer, *Crusades*, 60.

69 Lopez, "Culture"; Kedar, *Merchants in Crisis*.

they had in Acre: near the harbor, with only royal possessions separating them from their ships.⁷⁰ But the Genoese did not abandon their foothold in Acre. Far from it, they used every opportunity to secure more property, even offering to pay rent for more urban space.

In the twelfth century the Italian communes had sought tax benefits, the right to hold their own courts, and urban bases for their own churches, loggias, and warehouses. In the thirteenth century, however, they needed more than commercial facilities; they began to compete for strategic locations for the construction of defences. The Genoese tower in Acre (destroyed by the Venetians during the War of Saint Sabas in 1258) was particularly famous: the Florentine chronicler Villani called it “beautiful” and Martin da Canal’s *History of Venice* records that it was “so great and so defensible that in all the world there is no tower more beautiful, greater or more defensible.”⁷¹

A map of Acre from the early fourteenth century is remarkably detailed in its historic data on the city’s structure and divisions under Frankish control. It was drawn by the Genoese cartographer Pietro Vesconte on instruction from the Venetian author Marino Sanudo who visited Acre before its capture by the Mamluks in 1291. The Genoese quarter is marked clearly, with a round structure inside it labeled *Lamançoia*. This structure has been identified with this legendary tower.⁷² By the middle of the century, in fact, the Pisans and Venetians had also fortified their quarters and built towers. These Italian quarters in cities and islands around the Mediterranean were symbols of power, richness, and beauty, and the aesthetics of their monuments were as important as their military functionality. By 1258 the Genoese commune owned three towers in Acre along with six palaces, two churches, a cemetery and an orchard, in addition to numerous shops and stalls.⁷³ In an attempt to prevent his city from becoming a battlefield between the Italian communes, in 1264 Philip of Montfort, lord of Tyre, explicitly forbade them from building towers and other fortifications.⁷⁴

Genoese investment in Acre and Tyre was immense. The kingdom of Jerusalem was undoubtedly its most important and most lucrative market, as the volume of investment in commodities that were shipped there was

70 Mack, “Italian Quarters,” 159–65.

71 Wardi, “Monçoia,” 202–4; Giovanni Villani, *Cronica* 7.60; Martin da Canal, *Estoiros*, 164; Jacoby, “Crusader Acre.”

72 A Genoese inventory of 1249, however, mentions two towers: a new one and an old one; Kool, “Genoese Quarter,” 190–98.

73 Ibid., 191.

74 Mack, “Italian Quarters,” 162.

significantly higher than to any other long-distance destination. According to Epstein, investments in Ultramarine were consistently higher than in other destinations, from fifteen percent higher in weak years to nearly forty percent in the 1220s.⁷⁵ Balard's study of Genoese investments from the 1230s to the 1260s reveals even higher figures: 71% in 1233, 41% in 1251, and back to 67% in 1252. Conflict obviously affected the volume of trade—for example, the war with Venice affected trade at Acre in 1256—but the general trends are otherwise consistent.⁷⁶ Rather than impairing or being a burden on the kingdom of Jerusalem, Genoa was probably its most important asset in the years following the Fourth Crusade, roughly 1204–61.

While the Genoese played an important diplomatic role in the Eastern Mediterranean as mediators between Latin and Muslim courts, they also used those connections to advance their commercial interests, resulting in suspicion. In fact, the three maritime powers were regularly accused of betrayal for trading with the Muslim states of the East. Papal embargoes of 1162 and 1179 banned the export of arms, iron, timber, and other products considered “war materials,” even before Saladin's victories.⁷⁷ Genoa tried and failed to enforce a similar ban on its merchants: rather, there is ample evidence that Genoese merchants were on good terms with the Egyptians.⁷⁸ In 1198, a decade after the Third Crusade, when a second peace treaty was concluded between the crusader states and Alexandria, the Genoese increased their investments there, while in 1200 one Fulcone di Castello was sent to negotiate with the sultan.⁷⁹ Furthermore, from notarial records we learn that Genoa already possessed a *fondaco* with a bakery in Alexandria.⁸⁰ Genoa's official presence in Alexandria is thus confirmed. When Pope Innocent III ascended the papacy in 1198 he tried to stop trade with Muslims but the Venetians convinced him this was not a reasonable demand of the maritime cities. They did promise to avoid trade in war materials, and promised to halt all trade in times of actual war, which indeed Genoa did during the Fifth Crusade (1213–21).

75 *G&G*, 97 (incl. table 4) and 142.

76 Balard, “Les Génois,” 488–9.

77 Jacoby, “Supply,” 106–7; Stantchev, *Spiritual Rationality*, chaps. 1 and 2.

78 *Ibid.*, 108–9.

79 The Third Crusade ended with a pact signed on 2 September 1192 for a period of five years; it was renewed in 1198: *Continuation* 61, 74–5; David Jacoby, “Italiens,” 80–81.

80 On the historical evolution of the both the term and the institution: Constable, *Housing*.

Shifting Fields of Battle (1202–1300)

The Fourth Crusade (1202–4) is remembered as the crusade that never reached the Muslim frontier, but was diverted instead to Christian lands. It was led by some of Europe's greatest nobles—Baldwin of Flanders, Boniface of Monferrato, and the ageing but powerful Venetian doge Enrico Dandolo, to name only a few. Departing Venice in October 1202, the crusaders first targeted Zadar (Zara), a Christian city and enemy of Venice on the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea. According to the chronicler Villehardouin, one of the crusade's leaders, this attack was meant to help the crusaders pay back their debt to the Venetians for transportation and supplies.⁸¹ The next and ultimate victim of the crusaders' wrath was Constantinople.

The Genoese were not actually part of the crusade: as I suggested above, their experience with the Third Crusade may have led them to decline to transport the French crusaders. They were also engaged with affairs closer to home as key players in the dispute over the kingdom of Sicily between Innocent III and the German seneschal Markward von Anweiler—a conflict that has been controversially termed the "Sicilian Crusade."⁸² Yet they were certainly affected by the extensive fallout of the Fourth Crusade.⁸³ Genoese merchants lost their foothold and privileges in Constantinople; this had previously been a key Mediterranean market for them, but after its Latin conquest (1204) it became almost inaccessible for nearly six decades.

In the year 1200 Genoa was already ahead of its Italian rivals in developing its relationship with Alexandria. Sadly, the folder in which the treaties with Egypt were kept in Genoa's archives—which would have contained all official concessions and agreements—has disappeared. Genoa's good relationship with Egypt ended shortly after the Fifth Crusade was officially announced (1212). Many Genoese took the cross after Jacques de Vitry's preaching in the city; Jacques bragged in a letter to the pope of his successful recruitment among Genoese women. As if to confirm his boasting we find in the notarial archives of 1216 wills of five women who either planned to go on the crusade or left money for it.⁸⁴ It is also probably not a coincidence that Genoese ships heading to the kingdom of Jerusalem in that year were named *Benedicta* (blessed),

81 Villehardouin, *Conquest* 62–3, in *Chronicles*, 19.

82 Kennan, "Innocent III"; Abulafia, *Frederick II*, 94–102.

83 Fotheringham, "Fourth Crusade." On Genoese-Pisan relations between 1204 and 1260: Otten-Froux, "Identities and Allegiances," and Balard, "Les Génois."

84 *W&W*, 67–8.

Peregrina (pilgrim), and *Gloria* (glory), adding a touch of feminine spirituality to great warships.⁸⁵

Genoa began in this period to privatize not only its colonies but also its army. It became increasingly dependent on mercenaries and privateers, among whom Alamanno da Costa and Enrico of Malta were particularly infamous—pirates, admirals, and counts (respectively) of Siracusa and Malta.⁸⁶ The Fourth Crusade instigated a sharp decline in Venetian-Genoese relations, which deteriorated further when Alamanno da Costa and Enrico of Malta, acting on Genoa's behalf, fought the Venetians for control of Crete in the 1210s.⁸⁷ Conflict in the Latin East chiefly centered on the War of Saint Sabas, which began as a small boundary dispute between the Venetian and Genoese communities in Acre in 1251 but escalated quickly, drawing in allies and adversaries from around the Mediterranean including the Byzantine Empire, the military orders, and crusading armies (especially the Fourth and the Seventh). Ultimately, decades of war at sea amongst themselves in the first half of the thirteenth century had consequences for the Latins' ability to stand against the Mongols and the Mamluks in the second half.

The roots of the War of Saint Sabas lay in a property in Acre, over which Genoese and Venetians argued for four years in the early 1250s.⁸⁸ Then, in the early months of 1256, when the Genoese Barocio Mallone sailed into Acre with a ship he had bought from pirates, the Venetians recognized the captured ship as their own and reclaimed it by force. In retaliation, the Genoese and their Pisan allies seized several Venetian ships, and sacked parts of the Venetian quarter of the city, with significant damage to both houses and ships.

Hostilities escalated further when, in September 1256, Genoa's ally Philip of Montfort, lord of Tyre, ordered the confiscation of all Venetian property in his city. Building on old rivalries, other local parties took side: the Knights Templar supported Venice, so the Knights of Saint John aligned themselves with the Genoese. Among the local nobility, the lords of Ibelin and Jaffa sided with the Venetians against Philip, while the Embriaco lords of Gibelet

85 Cf. Krueger's list of ship names in the twelfth century: *Navi*, 158.

86 Abulafia, *Great Sea*, 327–31; Dalli, "Muslim Society."

87 Otten-Froux, "Identities and Allegiances," 261; Abulafia, *Great Sea*, 328–33, and "Henry of Malta."

88 On the War of Saint Sabas: Musarra, *Partibus Ultramaris*, 443–57; Jacoby, "Three Notes," 83–5; Kool, "Genoese Quarter," 190; Marshall, *Warfare*, 39–41. The Venetian chronicler Martin da Canal and the Templar of Tyre are the main sources describing this war; see Crawford, *Templar of Tyre*, 23–30. On the broader context for Genoese-Venetian-Pisan rivalries, see chap. 16.

supported Philip and the Genoese. The local community of merchants from Marseille, being rivals of the Genoese, supported Venice, while their Catalan rivals sided with the Genoese.

While the Genoese had the upper hand in the early part of the war, in 1257 the Pisans switched sides and signed a ten-year treaty with the Venetians. On 24 June 1258 the first stage of the war ended abruptly in what Epstein has called “calamitous naval defeat” in the harbor of Acre.⁸⁹ Thousands of Genoese men were killed or captured, with fifty galleys and four ships destroyed. The Genoese quarter, with its beautiful tower, was razed to the ground, and the Genoese were evacuated to Tyre. Negotiations led to an agreement in January 1261 that the Genoese would maintain their base in Tyre while the Venetians and Pisans were based in Acre.

While it resolved the local conflict, the 1261 agreement did not end the broader struggle between Genoa and Venice, the focus of which shifted elsewhere. Two months later, in March 1261, Genoa signed the Treaty of Nymphaeum with Michael VIII Palaiologos, ruler of Nicaea, following which the Byzantines and Genoese launched a joint attack on the Latin Empire and the Greeks regained Constantinople. Thus Genoa's loss of Acre ended in Venice's loss of Constantinople. For after this victory, Genoa was able to establish in Constantinople a major base that no other community had previously possessed: across the Golden Horn, the grateful emperor granted the Genoese a quarter big enough for a small city—Pera, also known as Galata, which they possessed until the Ottoman conquest in 1453, and which enabled them to control all trade into the Black Sea. The remarkable Galata Tower constructed by the Genoese in the fourteenth century can still be seen today (figs. 82–3).⁹⁰

Genoa's struggle against Venice continued at sea with a series of battles led by admiral and famous adventurer Benedetto Zaccaria, who also intervened in the affairs in the Latin East when relations between the count of Tripoli and Gibelet deteriorated in the 1280s.⁹¹ In 1289, despite Genoese support, the Mamluks conquered Gibelet, which foreshadowed by only two years the fall of Acre—along with the final collapse of the crusader state—in 1291.⁹² Right to

89 G&G, 146.

90 On Pera and Caffa, see chaps 14 and 18; also Balard, “Les Génois,” 235–64. On the Treaty of Nymphaeum, see discussions in chaps. 14, pp. 403–4, and 18, pp. 507–8; for objects commemorating it in Genoa: chaps. 9, p. 228, and 10, pp. 304–9.

91 Folda, *Crusader Art*, 384–5; Carr, “Trade or Crusade?”; and Lopez, *Genova marinara*, as well as Richard, “Comtes.”

92 Holt, *Mamluk Diplomacy*, 22.

its end, therefore, Genoa maintained a close involvement with the kingdom of Jerusalem.

Genoa's involvement in the crusades, which began in the early days of the First Crusade, lasted until the fall of the kingdom. For nearly two centuries the Genoese had helped to defend, expand and develop the crusader states, while the crusading experience also changed Genoa and its people. As a result of the crusades, the Genoese began their great expansion beyond the sea in *Ultramar*e and acquired much military and economic experience in their settlements and trading posts—useful lessons that served them for hundreds of years, even after the crusader states had fallen. Several times the crusades nearly bankrupted Genoa and caused civic turmoil, but on other occasions they were lucrative and opened the horizons of trade, innovation, and new technology. The Genoese contribution to military operations in the Latin East, and their investment in the urban development of its cities came at great cost—but for nearly two centuries their connection was pivotal to the prosperity of both Genoa and the Latin East.

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Colonies and Colonization

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The word “colony” is a charged one. It can conjure an exotic locus of otherness and distance, a zone of exploitation offering easy riches but also filled with risk, a place of adventure, opportunity, and personal transformation, as well as the context for interethnic contacts (and conflicts), unconventional experiences, and extraordinary choices. At the same time, individuals who migrate to colonies retain emotional ties to their homeland, which not only allow new settlers to recognize their compatriots in sometimes hostile circumstances, but also serve as a constant reminder to remain true to their origins. In medieval colonies, the collectivity acted according to moral and institutional responsibilities that bound distant parts of the same body. This age-old phenomenon was an expression of different needs—migratory, military, economic—and was exemplified by the ties between center and colony. Although the strength of these bonds varied depending on underlying institutional, socio-demographic, and mercantile elements, their existence was inevitable. Aulus Gellius, the second-century Roman author of the *Attic Nights*, considered Rome’s colonies to be direct extensions of the Roman people, of which they “seem to be miniatures, as it were, and in a way copies.”¹ Medieval colonies were certainly different from the colonies of Roman times—yet from political, legal, and institutional standpoints, even in the Middle Ages colonies tended to mirror their homeland. Reflecting upon the words of Aulus Gellius, the scholarly admirer of medieval urban civilization Carlo Cattaneo characterized this custom of duplicating settlements as typical of the Italic peoples since ancient times, as they tended to “spread from a city to the other, replicating the ways of life of their motherland.”² Similarly, the verses of the medieval poet known as the Anonymous Genoese exalt the diaspora of his fellow citizens and their creation of replicas of their Genoese homeland wherever they went.³

If, however, we consider the many medieval Genoese settlements and their characteristics, the situation is neither linear nor homogenous, since the term “colony” has been applied to a plethora of different places and contexts

¹ *Noc. Att.* 16.13.8.

² Cattaneo, *Città*, 52–3.

³ Anonimo genovese, *Poesie*, 566.

(maps 1–2). In William Heyd's *Histoire du commerce du Levant au Moyen Âge* (1885–6), the word “colony” denotes two different models, one related to commercial outposts, such as in the Crusader states and at Alexandria, and the other related to settlements typified by long-term residence, such as in the northern Pontic area.⁴

In referring to the Italian presence in Constantinople and the Greek territories, the same author distinguished between colonies, quarters, and consulates, but most of the time he exploited the versatility of the term “colony,” using it generically. Adolf Schaube would later use the term similarly in his 1906 study of the commercial activities of the Latin (i.e. western European) people.⁵ Schaube was nonetheless aware that the major frame of reference for the Genoese colonial empire is the Black Sea, where a coordinated system of settlements developed. Ligurian scholars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—namely Carlo Pagano, Ludovico Sauli, Michele Giuseppe Canale, Cornelio Desimoni, Luigi Tommaso Belgrano, Amedeo Vigna, Camillo Manfroni, and Gerolamo Bertolotto—were also interested in the history of Italian expansion. Their work concentrated mainly on the settlement of Pera-Galata in Byzantine territory (see figs. 82–3), granted by the Byzantine *basileus* and inhabited by westerners subject to the laws of their homeland, and the settlement of Caffa, the Genoese outpost in the Crimea (now Feodosia; figs. 79–80). Aware of the importance of the Black Sea in Genoese history, G.I. Bratianu, the author of *La Mer Noire: Des origines à la conquête ottomane* (1969), highlighted the importance of westerners' colonies for the Golden Horde. As Bratianu emphasized, thanks to these new opportunities the medieval economy took on global proportions: in fact, the contacts between Mongols and Italians contributed to the development of the first commercial and banking phase of European capitalism. Further, Guido Astuti's observations on the Genoese colony of Caffa showed the importance of the presence of a consul from 1281 and the end of hostilities with Uzbek Khan in 1313, since it was only then that the colonial role of the *civitas* could be fully expressed.⁶ Despite this focus on Genoa and the Black Sea, already in 1938 R.S. Lopez was considering all the Genoese colonial settlements in the Mediterranean.⁷ This approach enabled him to underscore the individualistic character of initiatives that originated in Genoa, whether undertaken autonomously or at the service of the homeland. The subsequent flourishing of studies based on Lopez's work—often those

4 Heyd, *Histoire*.

5 Schaube, *Handelsgeschichte*.

6 Astuti, “Colonie genovesi.”

7 Lopez, *Storia delle colonie* and *Su e giù*.

based on newly-found documents—shows its impact, even if it was shaped by the peculiar historical moment in which it was written.

In defining issues related to the colonies we must also take into account the contribution of scholars of the crusading movement. As suggested by the title of J. Prawer's well-known study *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (1972), the Crusades comprised a set of multifarious experiences in which the Genoese actively participated. With relation to the kingdom of Jerusalem, the crusades have generally been considered as part of a colonizing process. Within this context, the intersection of social, economic, and cultural factors led to a colonization of the colonizers. This means that the mercantile cities that had supported the Frankish military conquest managed to obtain portions of cities—or, as with Gibelet (now Jubayl), even an entire city—from the Franks, thus establishing a parallel and overlapping process of colonization. Studies in this area have underscored many important aspects of medieval colonization, and have emphasized the difference between temporary and permanent migrants, the former retaining merely mercantile interests while the latter established permanent residence. Here it is evident that overlapping jurisdictions were common. For example, the status of *burgensis* was conferred on certain Italian traders residing overseas by the rulers of Crusader states (and even on Venetians and Pisans by the Byzantine emperor towards the end of the twelfth century); these settlers were called *burgenses* because they came from a mercantile environment and did not properly belong to the feudal class. Yet they enjoyed possessions granted by local lords and were legally accountable for them to Frankish courts, which led to opposition from the Italian communes since they were thereby removed from the jurisdictions their home communes maintained in Italian overseas settlements.⁸ Later, each Italian commune tried to impose its own jurisdiction over all citizens overseas, those who resided in their settlements as well as those who developed special relationships with the rulers of the Crusader states. In any case, between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a progressive awareness of the jurisdictional rights sought by Italians spread along the shores of the Mediterranean, a fact which strengthened the status of these settlements and made the life of migrants safer.

These concerns, which reflect the multi-faceted nature of the term “colony,” shifted the attention of scholars, who started to view the colony not as a place but as a collectivity—that is, focusing not on the settlement itself but on the legal status of its inhabitants. In his studies of Cyprus, David Jacoby examined

8 Prawer, *Crusader Institutions*, 217–62; Jacoby, “Citoyens, sujets.” On the thorny question of Genoese citizenship outside Genoa, see chaps. 8, pp. 211–14, and 17, pp. 478–9.

the indigenous population that became naturalized Genoese (*ianuenses albi*) and, much like Cyprus's community of naturalized Venetians, enjoyed the protection of the Genoese commune. Considering the breadth of the evidence for medieval colonization, the term "colony" has been connected to other concepts, like the state, migrations and diasporas, and division of the world—all topics developed in volumes edited by Balard and Ducellier. These have considered a vast number of case-studies, many of them Genoese. All in all, it is fair to say that the Genoese case can be understood only against the backdrop of the general phenomenon of Mediterranean migration.

In the dominions of national monarchies capable of controlling their territories and economies, such as those of western and northern Europe, circumstances tended to favor smaller settlements where economic and financial interests dominated. To understand the issue properly without oversimplifying, we should consider two main categories, both widespread and long-lasting—the settlement colony and the commercial base (*loggia* or *fondaco*)—although the characteristics of the phenomenon that emerge from the analysis of individual cases are actually much more varied than this binary division.

Thanks to a wide range of evidence published and analyzed with relation to particular areas, we now understand that Genoese colonization was a process which lasted four centuries, spreading from the Mediterranean shores to the Atlantic coasts of northern Europe. Individualism and pragmatism, two salient characteristics of medieval Genoese society, prevent us from identifying a linear trajectory in its attitude towards colonization, since public interventions were often preceded, accompanied, or even supplanted by private ventures. Pragmatism was therefore a direct consequence of the absence of a centralized plan, a characteristic reflected in the internal contradictions of the Genoese system, especially as compared to Venice. In focusing on the correlation between the shift of Genoa's interests towards the West and the Ottoman occupation of the Eastern territories during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, scholars have undervalued Genoa's earlier colonizing activities in the area. At the same time, they have created a sort of hierarchy of events that prioritizes colonization in the East over colonization in the Tyrrhenian, and also Genoa's rivalry with Venice (which broke out in the East only after 1204) over its rivalry with Pisa (up to 1284). This view has only recently, and only partially, been revised.⁹

Far from being linear, therefore, Genoese expansion occurred organically, responding to the concrete possibilities of many individual moments. The

9 Petti Balbi, "Mediterraneo occidentale," 504–5; but regarding Pisa: Tangheroni, "Prima espansione," 23–27.

circumstances that encouraged Genoese activity in the Mediterranean were many. Colonization resulted from different motivations, objectives and phases, according to various models that often coexisted or overlapped: the “crusading” model; the “district” model; the “maritime protectionism” model; the “entrepreneurial and mercantile” model; and the “*fondaco, loggia, natio*” model.

Early Expansion: The Western Mediterranean

As is well known, the Genoese were already in Egypt in the 1060s—even if the first reference to a settlement dates to 1200, when a document attests the presence of a *fondaco* with a bath and oven in Alexandria.¹⁰ These first contacts were clearly triggered by the pursuit of commerce and profit. From 1098 onward, settlements in Syria and Palestine were the result of pilgrimage and the crusading movement, as well as Genoese aid to the western armies in reaching the Holy Land and conquering their dominions. Recent historiography has emphasized the importance of religious factors in the Western Mediterranean as well; Italians’ participation in this effort has been viewed as a response to the requests of the pope, a call first issued by Victor III in 1087.

At the beginning of the twelfth century the premises for a Genoese colonial system were already in place. The colonization of the main islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea originated in Genoa’s simultaneous attempts to assert hegemony over its *districtus*. The foundation of the maritime *castra* (fortresses) of Portovenere (1113) and Chiavari (1167–78) in the eastern Ligurian Riviera (these are the best-known, but there are other examples), and Bonifacio, a fortified settlement in Corsica which was first under Pisan and later under Genoese rule (1195)—all of which were intended for defense of the region and its sea—was a forceful demonstration of the commune’s authority.¹¹ Especially in Bonifacio, Genoa attracted new Ligurian settlers by offering incentives, as the city had done for other places in the *districtus* such as Rivarolo. Settlement on Corsica then continued with the foundation of Calvi (1268) and Castel Lombardo (1272). In fact, the commune’s actions followed earlier moves by Ligurian monasteries (San Venerio del Tino, and later San Benigno di Capodifaro) as well as Genoa’s ancient families (the Avogari, de Turca, Pevere, de Camilla, and de Mari). Such initiatives were also favored by the Genoese church, which upon its elevation to an archbishopric in 1133 obtained the bishoprics of Nebbio, Aléria, and Accia on Corsica. During the fourteenth century the Genoese competed

10 Kedar, “Mercanti.”

11 Guglielmotti, *Ricerche*, 41–53, and chap. 2 of this volume.

with and eventually defeated the Aragonese to expand their dominion over the entire island of Corsica, which they held (with occasional brief interruptions) until 1768.¹²

In Sardinia, settlement was promoted by the Benedictines with the goal of imposing the Latin religion on an island which had long favored Greek Christianity. Genoese initiatives in this area were supported by the bishops of Genoa; in 1108 the bishopric received its first donation of land and serfs (male and female inhabitants) on behalf of the Genoese community. Farms called *donnicalie* were assigned especially to the Genoese and Pisans by the judges who ruled the island, which by then was divided into four districts. When the power of the local judges collapsed in the second half of the thirteenth century, the Doria and Malaspina families managed to become even more powerful in Logudoro (the area around Sassari). It is well known that the Doria family was linked to the Genoese commune, and even Malaspina policy in this context can be included within Genoa's sphere of action.¹³ Genoese colonization of the island was aimed at exploiting the island's agricultural and pastoral resources, saltworks, and silver mines. This led to the establishment of rural settlements and entrepreneurial ventures such as a mining partnership formed in 1253. Far from being absent, in 1216 the Genoese commune obtained from Comita II of Torres the right to place consuls with jurisdiction over Genoese citizens within the territory.¹⁴ In 1287 the Doria agreed to let the commune appoint consuls or a *podestà* to the family's dominions, as well as to reduce taxes for fellow Genoese. At the end of the thirteenth century, Casteldoria and Castelgenovese (now Castelsardo) were the main bases of Ligurian domination in Sardinia; this was probably due to the need to concentrate the population in fortified places according to the same logic underlying the foundation of Castel Lombardo in Corsica. After all, even the extant documentation for Casteldoria during Branca Doria's rule (1321) reveals an interest in maintaining demographics to favor the agricultural exploitation of the villages. These provisions aimed to safeguard agricultural produce for commercial purposes, and confirm J. Day's emphasis on the gap between the minimum cost of salaries and lower prices in Sardinia compared to the rest of the Mediterranean.¹⁵

In 1284 the Genoese defeated the Pisans for good at Meloria, and as part of the peace concluded in 1288 they gained Sassari and its territory, where the

12 On Genoese colonization in Corsica, see especially Cancellieri, "Corses et Génois."

13 Pistarino, "Genova e Sardegna."

14 *LI* 1.1.2, doc. 411.

15 Day, *Sardegna*, 181.

Doria had numerous holdings. Respecting these possessions, the commune of Genoa did not attempt to undermine the family's supremacy—and thus when Sardinia was captured by the Aragonese in the early fourteenth century the Doria and Malaspina established ties with these new conquerors in an effort to maintain their lands.

Even the Genoese presence in Sicily was strongly characterized by aristocratic initiatives asserted both institutionally and through personal favor, as well as familiarity with the milieu of the royal court. In a certain sense we could define Ligurians' first contacts with the island during early Norman rule as "archaic": these connections were the result of aristocratic alliance. Enrico del Vasto, for example, a descendant of the marquess Aleramo of Monferrato who had extended his powers in western Liguria and southern Piedmont, also obtained Paternò, Butera, and Policastro in fief on the marriage of his sister Adelaide to Roger the Great Count of Sicily. The Genoese colonial phase began in 1116 when the consul Ogerio and his brother Amico were granted a strip of coastal land in Messina in order to rebuild an earlier *hospitium* (hostel), probably for those merchants who already frequented the island.¹⁶ A partial but clearly-defined sense of the widespread presence of the Genoese in Sicily beginning in the eleventh century is provided by the increase in commerce under Norman and Swabian rule and the proliferation of Genoese *fondaci* and possessions, such as the palace of admiral Margarito da Brindisi that was confiscated in 1221.¹⁷ The ensuing colonial phase only makes sense if we consider the Genoese aptitude for maritime and naval command, and the value placed on those skills by Sicily's Norman and Swabian sovereigns. Well-known figures such as Alamanno de Costa, count of Siracusa; Enrico Pescatore, count of Malta; and admirals Nicola Spinola and Enrico de Mari illustrate the Genoese ability to negotiate an ambiguous legal position as servants of both the commune and the emperor. Thanks to this ability, for example, in 1218 Enrico, count of Malta, obtained for the Genoese total fiscal exemption and freedom to trade in Sicily. Members of aristocratic families with longstanding ties to the regime—such as the de Mari under Frederick II, the Ventimiglia under Manfred, and numerous others like the Doria, Spinola, Lercari and Centurione under the Aragonese—also took advantage of the situation, obtaining fiefs and feudal incomes through tax-farming (*arrendamento*) and occupying high offices in the royal and ecclesiastical hierarchies.¹⁸ The Genoese controlled economic activities; they managed the countryside; they fostered the settlement

16 Pistarino, *Capitale*, 249–351.

17 AGC for 1221, 2.171.

18 Corrao, "Mercanti stranieri"; Petti Balbi, "Consolato genovese."

of their fellow Genoese by finding them agricultural or artisanal work; they offered shares in their commercial networks, and when necessary they married local women to acquire citizenship, thereby changing from *externi* (foreigners) to naturalized citizens.

When the Genoese started to penetrate the markets of the western Mediterranean, the political situation in Provence and Languedoc was riven by local rivalries and favored the establishment of Genoese settlements despite competition with the Pisans. These regions were valuable for their supplies of salt, wheat, legumes, cereal and other commodities; their connection with the Rhône valley; their textile trade; and their important fairs. However, the seigneurial powers of the Midi did not grant the Genoese permission to build *castra* (except for one on the Île Sainte-Marguerite, granted by the bishop of Lerins in 1181), nor did they permit the “feudal” penetration pursued by Genoese families elsewhere. The initiatives of the Genoese commune therefore prevailed over private ventures. The commune negotiated treaties simultaneously or alternately with feudal lords, ecclesiastical authorities and representatives of the Provençal cities. Various structures to house merchants were built in Saint-Gilles (1108, 30 houses), Narbonne (1132, land to build two towers and a *fondaco*), Montpellier (1155, 1225, 1252, *domus que dicitur fundus Ianue*, “a house known as the base of Genoa”), and Arles (1210, a *fondaco*).¹⁹ The presence of consuls, who represented the commune and exercised civil jurisdiction over fellow Genoese, is attested in Provence’s capital of Arles.

This was not a fully-fledged form of colonization, however, but an attempt to develop a sort of maritime protectionism. The Genoese did not physically assert their control over the territory: their presence expressed their desire to attain supremacy beyond the limits of their jurisdiction, which further developed into control of the sea and trade. They started to build stable settlements on the Iberian peninsula when they acquired Almería and one-third of Tortosa, which had just been reconquered from the Muslims through Genoese assistance. The interests of the Christian sovereigns who had promoted the expedition overlapped with those of the Genoese who sought new markets and the freedom of their fellow citizens who had been captured by the Saracens. Several aims drove the Genoese: the need to build safe outposts for trade with the kingdom of Valencia and, as has been hypothesized, the need to create alliances to counter the Toulouse-Provence alliance and establish supremacy over Occitania. This border area was enjoying a period of prosperity, particularly because of the urban and commercial development of Muslim society. With

19 LI 1.1.1, doc. 46; LI 1.1.2, docs. 359, 371, 374; LI 1.1.4, doc. 703; LI 1.1.6, docs. 940, 941. On the later presence of consuls see Petti Balbi, “Rappresentanze genovesi in Provenza.”

the concessions obtained from Boabdil Mohammed in 1149, Genoa's relations with the Muslim world were apparently aimed at establishing a settlement.²⁰ Thereafter Genoese interest in the Iberian peninsula followed two different paths: one for the Muslim area from Andalusia to north Africa, and another for the Christian area, towards the territories of the *Reconquista*.

Whether on the Iberian peninsula or in north Africa, the characteristics of Genoese settlements in Muslim territory—such as Dénia and Valencia—were consistent. The absence of defined topographical boundaries for *fondaci* within the city is evidence of these settlements' instability. This led to the absolute dependence of the foreign community on the local authorities. Enclosure of these settlements within walls obstructed communication between merchant communities, and enabled strict supervision designed to prevent conflicts among the different foreign communities and revolts against the local government. In 1188 Abu-Mohammed Abd-Allah, king of Majorca, granted a *fondaco* to the Genoese, together with permission to use the public bath once a week and the right to build a church, probably in response to requests made by Genoese merchants anticipating extended stays.²¹ With the *Reconquista*, new settlements continued to be based on the *fondaco*, yet in a city such as Majorca—which in 1233 was still brimming with memories of the Saracens, with its mosques and Muslim cemetery—the Genoese were contributing to the disappearance of Muslim identity and the transformation of the city. The area granted them *in alodium* was meant for the construction of a *fondaco*; it comprised houses and a bread-oven, and stretched across empty spaces, destroyed villages, and a mosque, where a chapel and a residence for five priests was subsequently built. Most importantly, this concession was endowed with rural allodial possessions, which were meant to sustain the clerics and could neither be sold nor enfeoffed.²²

The Genoese community in the Maghreb, together with the Pisans, formed a large group described by the anonymous author of the *De navali itinere* ("On a Sea Voyage," late twelfth century). The need to protect the Genoese community there became more pressing after the aggression of the *Calcurini*, mercenaries claiming to be crusaders who attacked Ceuta and destroyed the Genoese *fondaco* there.²³ A few decades later the Genoese annals refer to the Genoese *fondaci* that had been previously attacked, while in 1223 the

20 LI 1.1.1, doc. 118.

21 De Mas Latrie, *Traité*s, 2.113–5.

22 LI 1.1.2, doc. 307.

23 *Narratio Itineris*; Origone, "Itinerari sul mare."

Genoese obtained a *fondaco* in Tunis comprising a bath and an oven.²⁴ As David Jacoby correctly observed, colonization in Muslim territories could not follow the same path as in Christian areas; however, even in the former some progress was made.²⁵ This is proven by the development of both an older and a newer *fondaco* in Tunis, and the evolution of the Genoese *fondaco* in Alexandria. The structure of the consulate in Tunis can be reconstructed from the acts of notary Pietro Battifoglio dated 1288–9.²⁶ This included a consul, a scribe active at both the customs house and the consulate, and a *fondegarius* entrusted with the management of the *fondaco*. The consulate in Alexandria had developed in parallel, and its functions can be surmised from a treaty with the Egyptian monarch dated 1290 (which may have confirmed earlier arrangements). These included the recognition of the consul's judgment in disputes between Genoese parties; the presence of an interpreter when negotiating treaties; the regulation of customs operations; the right to hold keys and own warehouses; and the freedom to travel as far as Cairo.²⁷

Thanks to the laws of 1363, we are better informed regarding the fourteenth century in the Genoese outpost in Alexandria, which had then been active for more than a century and a half. Here the consul was assisted by six councilors, two of them *clavigeri* (keyholders or treasurers). In addition to any payments he received from the sultan, the consul also earned an annual salary of two hundred gold bezants; he had two servants and a cook. At the beginning of his appointment, the consul and his council would choose two merchants to act as *sindacatori* (syndics) from among the merchant inhabitants of the settlement; their task was to oversee the conduct of the consul and his staff, even in criminal matters, and send any relevant legal materials to the *sindacatori* in Genoa. The Genoese authorities tried to smooth their relationship with the Saracens by avoiding any provocative behavior; for example, they often dedicated churches to the Virgin Mary, a Christian figure accepted by Muslims. Likewise, to avoid offending Muslim sensibilities wine could only be sold to Christians—in quantities prescribed by the sultan, and only in the warehouse, i.e. the lower part of the *fondaco*. The consulate in Alexandria was thus subject to Muslim authority because the consul was at least partly economically dependent on the sultan and limited in its capacity to represent Genoese interests, but it was

24 AGC for 1223, 2.192.

25 Jacoby, "Italiens en Égypte."

26 *Notai-Tunisi*, doc. 128.

27 LI 1.1.7, doc. 1189.

also controlled by Genoa, who supervised its officials' conduct through the *sindacatori*.²⁸

Development of a System: The Eastern Mediterranean

By going beyond the limits (or better, the horizons) of their usual routes, the Genoese faced unforeseen consequences. Long journeys and lengthy stays in the East necessitated the creation of an entire colonial system, which was fully formed in administrative terms by the mid-thirteenth century. During the following century, the system was progressively expanded with new settlements populated by permanent settlers—mostly Genoese artisans and individuals from the Ligurian Rivas—a long process that began with concessions in Antioch (1098) and the Kingdom of Jerusalem (1104).²⁹ These provided the Genoese with land not just within the city but also in the suburbs, including villages around Acre, Caesarea, and Arsuf that would be useful to the main settlement. The commune's initial difficulties with exercising direct control over these new possessions spurred it to experiment with indirect forms of colonization: thus it enfeoffed Gibelet to the Embriaci, and granted the management of the Genoese *rugae* (neighborhoods) of Antioch and Latakia (1147) and of Antioch and Acre (1154) to the Genoese branch of the same family, which was probably still managing them in the early thirteenth century.³⁰

During the twelfth century, Genoese mercantile settlements in the eastern regions were temporary. In the thirteenth century, despite rivalries between the Italian communes, the growth of Acre and Tyre and closer diplomatic relations with the Eastern powers suggest that the settlements' populations became more stable, especially among the artisanal class. The urban settlement of Acre is still being explored by archeologists, but documents have revealed that its most distinctive elements were: three towers, a street referred to as *de tribus meagiis*, another one referred to as *cooperta* (covered), two churches (one dedicated to Saint Lawrence and the other one to Saint James), a garden, an oven, several buildings, houses, workshops and warehouses.³¹

Similarly, during the twelfth century even the Genoese quarter in Constantinople was neither extensive nor populous, the Genoese presence

28 *Regulae comunis Ianue*, chaps. 109–117.

29 *CDG* 1, docs. 7, 15. See also chap. 17, pp. 475–6.

30 Origone, “Embriaci a Genova.”

31 Benente/Lavagna, “Ricerche archeologiche”; also Kool, “Genoese Quarter.” On the Genoese settlement in Tyre after 1187, see Mack, “Italian Quarters.”

in *Romania* being merely itinerant.³² Although the Genoese had ambitions in Crete and Rhodes, Genoese activity in the Latin empire of Constantinople continued to diminish after 1204, so we possess only fragmentary information—for example, regarding a small settlement managed by a consul on the island of Euboea and references to the concession of a few possessions (a house and a *campum*) in Athens and Thebes, where the Genoese were represented by a consul so as they could live in peace “as well as they do in the town of Acre or other places where they are greatly privileged.”³³ Around the mid-thirteenth century, however, these certainties vanished when a war—the underlying motives for which were deep-rooted and complex colonial rivalries—broke out between the Italian communities in Acre for the land owned by the monastery of Saint Sabas.³⁴

Even after these events, changes in the international situation and their alliance with Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259–82) affected the next phase of Genoese colonization; the treaty of Nymphaeum (1261) must be considered fundamental here as it granted the Genoese important concessions.³⁵ For example, the treaty awarded the Genoese a quarter in Constantinople, thereby giving them access to navigation in the Black Sea. It also promised them a number of maritime posts in Anea, Cassandra (near Thessalonica), Mytilene, Chios, Smyrna (now İzmir), Crete, and Euboea; furthermore, Genoese who pledged fealty to the emperor were granted the right to keep their citizenship. Since these enclaves were subject to different forms of political dependence, Genoa's colonial hegemony was discontinuous. Nonetheless, the Genoese administrative framework held everything together. For example, the city of Caffa had been founded by the Genoese in Tatar territory. As it grew in importance, it became preeminent in the rest of the Black Sea from Chilia-Licostomo to Trebizond; the sphere of influence of the *podestà* of Pera was reduced to include only Samastri (now Amasra, Turkey), while other settlements were made subject to the consul of Caffa. Similarly, the Genoese were interested in establishing commercial relationships along the Bulgarian coast; they had been involved in the skirmishes between the Byzantines and Constantin Tich of Bulgaria, and were trading with Vicina (on the west coast of the Black Sea) as early as 1281. Despite difficult relations with the Bulgarians, the Genoese colony on the lower Danube prospered during the later fourteenth century due to the importance of their new settlement,

32 Schreiner, *Konstantinopel*, 85.

33 *LI* 1.1.4, doc. 671.

34 Musarra, *Guerra*; see also discussion in chap. 17, pp. 489–90.

35 *LI* 1.1.4, doc. 749. See also chaps. 14, pp. 403–4, and 16, p. 456.

Chilia-Licostomo (now Chilia Veche, Romania), which is attested by archival sources about the second half of the fourteenth century, but we have no archaeological deeds. Chilia, in the internal part of the delta, comprised a loggia, a communal palace, a house for the consul, an oven, a mill, a square, houses, warehouses, a slaughterhouse, and a Greek church; Licostomo, was perched on an island and therefore more exposed to the sea. The settlement comprised a *castrum*, which served as the chancery of the governor of the *Mahona* and residence of the consul, as well as Franciscan and Dominican churches. The dual name of the settlement reflected the different functions exercised by the two enclaves: Chilia was used for storage while Licostomo served as a link with the sea.³⁶

We do not possess much information regarding the private or semi-private domains that were established rather late in the area of the Black Sea—in Matrega, Bachtiar, Ilice, and other localities—and which appear only sporadically in the documents. It is evident, however, that Caffa's supremacy was extended to include all settlements, even in places such as Matrega, Mapa, and Bachtiar, where its jurisdiction was less direct than in those localities governed by a functionary appointed by the consul in Caffa, such as Copa, Sinope, Chersonesos, Soldaia, Tana, and Trebizond.³⁷ Given the relative newness of these settlements, the chief concern of the Genoese was their relations with the Mongol powers that surrounded their enclaves and had appointed representatives to protect their subjects. In order to avoid retaliation from the Mongols and pursue colonization in the Black Sea, the proliferation of spontaneous settlements was halted, and both functionaries and private individuals were forbidden from building (or rebuilding) fortifications.³⁸ In this sense, the most eloquent text on ethnic coexistence is the Statute of Caffa (1449), which extended Genoese jurisdiction to Tatars and their families after one year of residence in the city or its suburbs. As lords of the city and the villages of the *Gothia*, the Genoese were responsible for the region's other communities: for example, respecting its Jewish and Orthodox minorities, overseeing the election of the Greek *tabellioni* (scribes or notaries), and maintaining relationships with the *tudun*, a chief who represented the *canluchi* (Mongols not subject to Genoese jurisdiction). Thus the Genoese court had to employ interpreters and

36 Airaldi, "Genovesi a Licostomo"; Todorova, "Insediamenti."

37 Virtually all of these settlements now have different names: in the Caucasus, Matrega (ancient Fanagoria) = Taman, in the Strait of Kerç; Copa = Slavjansk-na-Kubani, on the Kuban delta; Mapa = Anapa, on the northeast coast of the Black Sea; Caffa (ancient Feodosia) = Kefe, Teodosija; Chersonesos = Sevastopol; and Soldaia = Sudak, in Crimea; Sinope = Sinop; and Trebizond = Trabzon, in Turkey.

38 Vigna, "Codice diplomatico," 644.

scribes fluent in the Greek and Saracen languages, provide lodging for foreigners, and respect local customs—such as the chanting of the *calimera* (a Greek greeting) on special occasions, the reception of the Greeks in the communal palace on the feast of the Epiphany, or the blessing of the sea by the *papates* (Orthodox priests).³⁹

Western settlers sought to maintain this difficult equilibrium not only by tolerating the customs of other Christians and granting concessions to the local Tatars, but also by collaborating with the richer and more prestigious local “Saracen” population.⁴⁰ This practice, for example, enabled the colony of Tana to resist until the fall of Caffa in 1475. Tana, which consisted of side-by-side Genoese and Venetian quarters surrounded by Greek and Jewish settlements, as well as Tatar, Alan, Russian, and Zichian villages, all located outside the walls of a Mongol citadel, was eventually reduced to a tiny population. The small numbers of Latins as compared to Easterners became even more extreme after 1453, yet the strength of the Genoese legacy explains the continued presence of Latins in Crimea: Antonio Spinola, who served the Tatar khan Gâzi Girây alongside other Genoese during the sixteenth century, is one such example.⁴¹

During the fourteenth century, Genoese sovereignty was especially strong in the Aegean, where Genoese families serving the Byzantine emperor had settled. The Zaccaria were present in Chios and Phocaea (Focaea, now Foça), while in New Phocaea (now Yenifoça) the Cattaneo served as Byzantine governors for a brief time; these were followed by the Adorno, who acted as *podestà* and *capitanei* for the Genoese government. The Gattilusio, whose coins displayed symbols suggesting their ties to the Byzantine empire, were present in Lesbos, Ainos (now Enez, Turkey), and Lemnos. Wide variation in the relationships between Genoa, the Byzantine Empire, and these family dominions make it difficult to define this state of affairs clearly, however.

Starting from the Genoese conquest in 1346 we may observe on Chios the gradual dissolution of its institutional relationship with the Empire. In 1347, the creditors of the commune who had financed the expedition that conquered Chios met together and founded an association called a *Mahona*.⁴² Their agreement with the commune established that the *Mahonenses* (members of their association) should control the use and disposition of resources (*dominium utile et directum*) on Chios, especially the income from the trade in mastic, and that these should be separate from criminal and civil jurisdictions (*merum et mixtum imperium*), which were the responsibility of the Genoese commune,

39 Vigna, “Codice diplomatico,” 608, 609, 611, 650, 677.

40 Karpov, “Tana.”

41 Andreescu, “Spinola.”

42 See discussion in chap. 15, pp. 431–4.

represented by the *podestà*. Meanwhile, imperial power was limited to formal recognition and the payment of tribute, which eventually disappeared.

Lesbos is a somewhat different case. Although granted to the Gattilusio by John V Palaiologos (r. 1341–91), it was subject to direct Byzantine sovereignty. Although the evidence is discontinuous, its fifteenth-century deeds reveal the significant impact of a Genoese community that had been attracted to the island by the presence of a favorable dynasty. The Gattilusio family continued to exercise jurisdiction until the Ottoman conquest, collaborating and forming matrimonial alliances with the merchant population at home.⁴³ Genoese influence affected every aspect of the settlement. The urban organization of Lesbos was modeled on Genoese Chios: the houses of the ruling family, the more affluent Genoese, and a few Greeks were located in the *castrum* (fortress), which also included the chancery, the bench where the *vicario* administered justice, the great piazza of the loggia, and a few artisans' shops. The houses had porticoes and stairs where notaries frequently worked; there was a bazaar in the marina, and Latin and Greek churches were everywhere. Cultivated fields surrounded the settlement and ships were moored in the inlet of Gera.⁴⁴

Despite legal differences among settlements, however, Genoa supported its entire Eastern dominion in situations of war with Venice or danger of Turkish attack. The *officiales provisionis Romanie* (officials for the governance of *Romania*), especially, were charged with maintaining commercial and political control and with safeguarding Genoese settlements wherever they were, irrespective of the rights and privileges of individual Genoese. For example, in 1426 the *officiales* granted certain bureaucratic requests made by the subjects of Giacomo Gattilusio, lord of Mytilene.⁴⁵ Although Gattilusio held the island in fief from the Byzantine emperor, they seem to have considered it more important that he was their fellow citizen and would support their trade.

Over the course of a century, Genoa had created a colonial system in the East that supported its markets through relationships between merchants scattered throughout its commercial hubs, the trade in inbound and outbound commodities, and the connections—even at an individual level—between all areas involved. These attempts to create efficient settlements as parts of a network system that could guarantee the reception and facilitation of freight along trade routes explain why the Genoese were interested in establishing new bases. Some of these, such as Glarentza in Morea (Greece),⁴⁶ were merely

43 Wright, *Gattilusio*, 132–43, 260–66.

44 *Notai-Mitilene*, docs. 2, 6, 7, 10, 16, 17, 20, 25, 32, 34, 64.

45 *Liber Officii*, docs. 135, 136, 137.

46 Balard, "Clarence."

ports of call; despite poor documentation others, such as Thessalonica, were settlements with a consul, while still others became important emporia, albeit with varying degrees of success. At the end of the thirteenth century, Famagusta (Cyprus) and Laiazzo (now Yumurtalık, in southern Turkey) were notable for their significant commercial development: the former was the first stop for seafarers from the west and the Levant towards Chios and the Black Sea, as well as a gateway to Anatolia and Egypt. After the fall of the Crusader states, Famagusta became a key hub for trade in the Levant. Laiazzo—one end of the Anatolian land route connecting the Black Sea to the Aegean through Sivas, and connected via navigational routes to Cyprus, Chios, Tripoli, Beirut, and Tarsus—became the Mediterranean outpost for Asian commercial routes after the creation of the Mongolian empire.

This period was characterized by favorable coincidences: the Genoese obtained grants from King Leo II of Armenia (1215) in Tarsus and from Queen Alice of Cyprus (1218) in Famagusta and Limassol. The settlements on Cyprus grew rapidly: in 1232 the Genoese were granted a village with its income and a resident population in the area of Dispoire, in Limassol; a house and a bath in Nicosia; houses in Famagusta; and houses and an oven in Paphos.⁴⁷ The heterogeneous population which had come from the Holy Land presented no difficulties: like the Antiochenes and Tripolitans, the Syrians were accustomed to dealing with Armenians, and managed to recreate the bustling cosmopolitan atmosphere they had left behind by building a Syrian enclave with its own autonomous court.

Genoese commercial documents of the last quarter of the thirteenth century suggest that the two settlements developed simultaneously, so Laiazzo too may be described as “a new emporium.”⁴⁸ At their height, both settlements followed the same model: a main church dedicated to Saint Lawrence (in Famagusta, built in 1301),⁴⁹ a loggia and warehouses, houses for the western inhabitants, the *fondaco*, the commune, a consul and his assistants, a scribe and *placarius* (two in Famagusta), and an international community comprising both Europeans and easterners, including the Teutonic knights and the Hospitallers. The Genoese government’s chief concerns with regard to Famagusta, which they obtained as a pledge from Peter II of Cyprus (r. 1369–82), were political and administrative. The settlement was governed by a *podestà/capitaneus*, while the dispute with the king of Cyprus over his

47 LI 1.1.2, docs. 346, 348, 351.

48 Jacoby, “New Emporium.”

49 *Notai-Cipro*, doc. 349.

insolvency was never resolved.⁵⁰ The laws promulgated in 1447, when the Casa di San Giorgio took over administration of the city, are evidence of the ongoing crisis: instead of addressing issues of coexistence with the local community, they aimed to reduce the cost of wages, improve defense and the settlement's relationship with Genoa, and attract migrants to repair abandoned buildings.⁵¹ Thus the laws that ought to have resolved the crisis were instead a harbinger of the settlement's demise.

Distance from home, the necessity of maintaining good local relations, the importance of supporting Genoese merchants logistically, and the development of local ventures—such as the extraction of alum in Phocaea, the cultivation of mastic in Chios, and management of the mint in Trebizond—meant that each colony developed its own character, thus proving the ability of the Genoese to adapt to different social and environmental circumstances. It is the settlements of the Levant, therefore, that cemented the representation of Genoese authority. Viscount, consul, *podestà*, or rector: regardless of the title used, Genoese officials were responsible for coordinating with and representing their home city while operating on a wider regional scale. Thus the *podestà* of the major settlement of Pera had to manage several smaller settlements while also acquiring new ones. Sources mention a Genoese consul in Syria in 1192⁵² and a viscount in Acre in 1200.⁵³ In 1218 Alice of Cyprus gave Genoa permission to send to her kingdom a consul and a viscount, who would administer justice except in cases of treason, theft, or homicide. In 1232 Ingo Ferrario and Guglielmo Doria, “consuls and viscounts of the Genoese in Syria,” were already stationed at Nicosia; even at Paphos there was housing for Genoese officials. The *podestà* “for all nearby seas” (*in omnibus partibus cismarinis*) in office in Famagusta from 1301 seems later to have been appointed *podestà* of the Genoese on Cyprus. The presence of this official, whose role was strengthened after 1373, did not result in the removal of the viscount, who is still mentioned in 1447. According to the statute, together with the Genoese merchants in Famagusta and Nicosia, the viscount was responsible for appointing successors to the *podestà* and *capitaneus* if they died in office. In Armenia, too, the offices of consul and viscount co-existed, although they were often held by one person. Due to Laiazzo's growing importance, its consul may also have held the office of viscount: this may have occurred with Filippino Tartaro, who appears in 1273 as consul and viscount of the Genoese in the kingdom of

50 Otten, “Institutions.”

51 Vitale, “Statuti.”

52 Pistarino, *Genovesi d'Oriente*, 53; Balard, “Consoli,” 86.

53 *Guglielmo da Sori* 1, doc. 381.

Armenia, and in 1274 as consul and viscount of Laiazzo, while the two officials active in 1277 and 1279 were referred to as “consul and viscount of the Genoese in the kingdom of Armenia.”⁵⁴

The Late Middle Ages: The Iberian Peninsula

At the opposite end of the Mediterranean, thirteenth-century treaties with the kings of Aragon, Castile and Granada illustrate the extent to which Genoese commerce managed to penetrate both Christian and Muslim areas, despite their diverse development. Genoa's first diplomatic contacts with the Iberian peninsula date back to commercial treaties of 1126 and 1127 concerning Barcelona.⁵⁵ Yet only in 1233, after the conquest of the Balearic islands (1129), did King Peter III of Aragon grant the Genoese the right to install consuls and a court for first-level civil cases in all his conquered (and yet to be conquered) maritime cities, particularly in Majorca.⁵⁶ The development of these Genoese settlements was hampered by political disagreements with the Aragonese, however. The Genoese presence became significant only during the fifteenth century, especially through their settlements in Barcelona, Valencia, and Majorca. Research conducted in the archives of the Crown of Aragon has revealed that these settlements were notable for their skilled craftsmen: spinners, weavers, silversmiths, jewelers, silk cloth makers, and a cartographer.⁵⁷

In Castile, a privilege granted by Ferdinand III in 1251 was the cornerstone of the development of the Genoese settlement in Seville and the rights associated with it (a quarter with a *fondaco*, an oven, a bath, and a church with a chaplain). This privilege articulated the rights and regulations according to which the Genoese should live and trade, and awarded them the right to install two consuls. Renewals of this concession appear in the *Book of Privileges of the Genoese*, a manuscript preserved in the Archivo General de Simancas that contains transcriptions of documents dating up to the sixteenth century.

In 1261, when Alfonso X of Castile established the limits of the Genoese *barrio* (quarter) in Seville, he granted them a mosque to be used as an office for the administration of justice, extended their concession to all the areas conquered from the Saracens, and decreed that only the Genoese were allowed to

54 *Notai-Laiazzo*: Federico di Piazzalunga (1274), docs. 14, 25, 34, 34a, 43, 43b, 46, 79, 89; Pietro di Bargone (1277, 1279), docs. 1, 3, 5, 11, 16, 63, 66, 72, 80, 116.

55 *CDG* 1, doc. 46. Ruiz-Doménec, “Genova y Barcelona.”

56 *LI* 1.1.2, docs. 307, 308; Abulafia, *Kingdoms*.

57 Ferrer i Mallol, “Italians,” 428–47.

own houses in their quarter.⁵⁸ During the fifteenth century, this quarter came to exhibit the prestige, wealth, and devotion of the Genoese. They were represented by their consul, but members of the most important families were not usually permanent residents. As in Cordoba, Murcia, Cadiz, and Malaga their legal status depended on the nature of their residency and their relationship with local authorities, who differentiated between *vecini* (long-time residents and citizens), *estantes* (more recently-arrived residents who owned property), and *moradores* (visitors).⁵⁹

Genoese commerce also flourished in Muslim territories. The Genoese traveled frequently between one area and another, and although their interest in Almería dates from 1147, most information on their settlements comes from a later period. In concordance with Muslim custom, the 1279 concessions in Granada did not establish a specific *fondaco*; instead, they granted a number of *fondaci* in the territories of Boabdil Mohammed III, each comprising a church, oven, bath and warehouses. Thus in 1298 the Genoese consuls Giovanni de Mari and Francesco de Nigrono were active in Almería and Granada respectively.⁶⁰ There are also scattered reports of Genoese citizens and warehouses in Malaga, the main harbor used by the Genoese community; in 1487 they had a coastal fortress at their disposal.⁶¹ It is probable, however, that the Genoese quarters in Muslim territories were not as grand as those in Seville; rather, they served as storage areas and administrative centers designed to protect and control the community (whose members, for example, were subject to nightly curfew).

The Genoese presence on the Iberian peninsula during the fifteenth century is an especially good subject of study, not only because of the integration of the Genoese community and the individuals and events significant for the history of exploration, but also because of the richness of the sources. The Genoese who migrated to Portugal, in particular, were members of the elite: this is the case of the admiral Emanuele Pessagno, along with his colleagues and descendants. The position of the Pessagno, who in 1317 became vassals of the king and held a fief, attracted other Genoese, Florentines, and Piacentines to Lisbon. The region's profound nautical interests also fostered such personalities as Antonio da Noli, governor of Santiago, along with names such as the Cassano, Doria, Imperiale, Lomellini, Salvago, and Spinola. Portuguese migration and settlement to the Atlantic islands (Madeira, the Cape Verde, and the Azores)

58 LI 1.1.4, docs. 721, 794, 795, 796.

59 Ladero Quesada, "Genovesi a Siviglia."

60 LI, 1.1.7, doc. 1187; Gari, "Genova y Granada."

61 Malpica Cuello/Fábreas García, "Genoveses."

were entrepreneurial ventures aimed at exploiting raw materials, and despite enriching Genoa, were chiefly private initiatives. Jacques Heers has observed that, unlike in Andalusia, the Genoese did not impose their own commercial system in Portugal; he therefore rejects the idea of economic colonialism, although the resourcefulness and rivalries of the Genoese families there affected local circumstances and the economy in general—such as the shift of the sugar trade from Malaga, where it was managed by the Centurioni and Spinola, to Madeira, where it was monopolized by the Lisbon Lomellini.⁶²

The methods and strategies of this last phase of colonization have been studied more by scholars of the western Middle Ages than by historians of the medieval Levant. But some scholars have stressed the interdependence of commercial activities at both ends of the Mediterranean and even up to northern Europe, and the roles of the same families in all areas; thus the experience acquired in the East is essential to understanding the transformations of the fifteenth century.⁶³ Each territorial dominion—particularly Chios, Phocaea, and Lesbos—formed the basis of important commercial and financial ventures, such as the partnership to exploit alum which led to the establishment of cartels managed by the strongest members of the mercantile aristocracy.⁶⁴ Along the coasts of Spain and Africa, the peculiarities of the previous phase developed into a system. This depended on the expanding role played by family groups whose local members controlled the fruit trade, sugar production, and other agricultural resources. Some were bankers, offering money and technical skills to local rulers, while others held monopolies such as that on coral extraction in Marsacares (now El Kala, Algeria), where the notary Cassano Casella worked for local Ligurians during the second half of the fifteenth century.⁶⁵

The Late Middle Ages: Northern Europe

At Bruges the concept of staple rights (required stop and trade) was clearer than in the previous cases. This reflects the exclusively commercial nature of Genoese contacts there, as expressed in the peace treaty dated 1395 that ended a long Genoese absence from the Flemish city. The Genoese community

62 Heers, "Portugais."

63 On the changing trade patterns of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see chaps. 14, pp. 413–17, and 16, pp. 459–62.

64 Wright, *Gattilusio*, 172–85.

65 Balletto, "Famiglie."

(*natio*), which did not build a loggia (its official seat) until 1399 (figs. 77–8), was administered by a consul and two *massarii* (treasurers), and engaged strictly in commercial activities. It was composed of aristocratic merchants who elected their own consul. Within the context of this two-century-old settlement, commercial activities were not based on the ventures of a single individual but rather on collective endeavors: the *case* (houses), or stable companies with members active in different commercial hubs. The presence of merchants at the *natio* in Bruges was highest between 1411 and 1460, and the *natio* owed much of its success in this foreign hub to Genoa, which protected and supported the community diplomatically while demanding financial contributions from it on certain occasions.⁶⁶

The same routes that had taken Genoese merchants to Bruges and Antwerp also took them *ad partes Anglie*, to the ports of Southampton and London. There the Genoese faced a powerful state often shaken by xenophobic rebellions triggered by fear of competition, so any colonial ambitions gave way to a series of visitors, authorized residents, famous pirates, and prestigious offices held by members of the foreign commercial aristocracy, who were often welcomed as authorized residents or naturalized by royal permission, as in the well-known case of Antonio Pessagno.⁶⁷ Our terminology must adapt itself to these new circumstances involving a mercantile diaspora, emigration, and a foreign context in which the Genoese had no pretenses to ownership or territorial jurisdiction, nor was migrant labor available. What remained of medieval Genoese colonization tactics was their propensity for travel, their ability to form long-distance trade networks, and their transferable skills.

Although recent scholarship has extensively covered commercial activity in Genoa's various trade hubs, the phenomenon of colonization is far less studied. Through their navigational skills, the Genoese acquired the inclination to colonize, and through their colonial dominions they tried to surpass the limits of their *districtus*—both the narrowness of its territory and its scarcity of resources. Whether well-studied or implicit, several themes emerge from each colonial settlement: public and private strategies aimed at acquiring a dominion; the enfeoffment of colonial cities by the commune (Almería, Siracusa, Gibelet); the role of Liguria and other areas in populating colonial settlements; migrations of the labor force and of the elite; local and migrant artisans; different types of settlements (such as *castra*, cities, *rugae* or quarters, and *fondaci*); the buildings common to such settlements (such as baths, ovens, churches,

66 Petti Balbi, *Mercanti*, 26–8, 75–95. On cultural exchanges between Flanders and Genoa, see chaps. 10, pp. 309–13, and 11, pp. 339–40.

67 Abulafia, “Cittadino”; Basso, “Comunità genovese.”

wells, gardens, warehouses, and other structures); the Christian *Reconquista* and the granting of commercial quarters in Muslim areas; the essential function of each settlement (military, commercial, urban, or entrepreneurial); the rural extensions of each settlement; colonial administration and representation, from the group of merchants inhabiting the settlement to officials sent out by the home city such as viscounts, consuls, *podestà*, and *capitanei* who maintained relationships with local authorities; the central offices in charge of regulation and defense (*Officium Gazariae*, *Officium provisionis Romaniae*, *Officium victualium*); crime in the colonial context (such as disputes, homicide, theft, and violence against women); the position of women in the colonies as slaves, concubines, and wives, both local and migrant; religious aspects such as concessions of religious buildings in Muslim territories, inter-ethnic coexistence, and mixed marriages; forms of Genoese citizenship extended to locals (such as the *burgenses* in Caffa and the East); Genoese legal, seafaring, and commercial expertise at the service of foreign rulers; documents recording legal and juridical practices, as well as local knowledge (such as statutes, treaties, notarial deeds, travel accounts, and guides for merchants); and disagreements between the Genoese commune and hegemonic colonial groups. A comparative study—for which there is not enough room in these pages, and which would first require numerous preparatory studies—could yield a comprehensive picture of Genoese colonial organization.

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